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Binders +44 (0) 20 8519 3969

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SUBSCRIPTIONS RATES
Annual subscription is for 12 months (13 issues, prices include postage) UK: £37.70
Europe/Eire (inc. VAT): 78.00 euros (airmail)
USA: $89.65 (airmail)
Rest of world: £63.30 (airmail)

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NOVEMBER 2005

WORLD SOCCER comment

A QUICK GLANCE at the list of qualifiers for the World Cup reveals one striking thing: Germany 2006 will feature a record number of first-time finalists (excluding 1930, of course). This month, to the already-qualified Ukraine, we can add Angola, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Togo and Serbia & Montenegro. The winners of the CONCACAF-Asia play-off, Trinidad & Tobago or Bahrain, will join them, as will Slovakia if they successfully negotiate their play-off against Spain.

Those narrow-minded Europeans who question the credentials of such first-time qualifiers should do their homework. The likes of Ghana and Ivory Coast have more players performing regularly in the UEFA Champions League than most European nations (Scotland, Wales and the Republic of Ireland spring to mind).

Virtually all the major European countries have qualified. That reigning European champions Greece have failed to make it will not trouble too many people, but it is worrying that Nigeria and Cameroon, Africa's most experienced World Cup teams, have not made the cut. Their failure to qualify is as much a result of their own complacency as their rivals' strengths. It's possible that the presence of new African qualifiers offers proof of a new strength in depth in African football. However, the absence of experienced African teams in Germany is likely to ensure that Europe and South America continue their domination of the knockout stages.

So, is the arrival of this new wave of international talent a victory for the increasing globalisation of football, or merely payback time for Sepp Blatter's supporters outside Europe? Probably a little of both, although the shocking decision by FIFA to replay the first leg of the Asian play-off between Uzbekistan and Bahrain deserves condemnation.

The Uzbeks are right to feel aggrieved by FIFA's ruling, made because of a refereeing error: they had won the original game 1-0, were disadvantaged by the error anyway and only drew the restaged match on their way to an away goals defeat. But, as conspiracy theorists would no doubt point out, Uzbekistan is not an oil-rich nation from a region that heavily backed Blatter in the 1998 and 2002 presidential elections and which has growing representation on FIFA's committees.

FIFA's decisions can usually be filed under cock-ups rather than conspiracies, but in this case a dangerous precedent has been set by the breaking of football's cardinal rule. The referee's decision is final no longer.

Gavin Hamilton, Editor (gavin_hamilton@ipcmedia.com)

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PERU: Mexico turned on the style to beat Brazil in the Final of the World Under-17 Championship. **Page 48**

BLATTER ATTACKS PREMIERSHIP
SWITZERLAND: The FIFA president launched a remarkable assault on English clubs and players. **Page 6**

SENT OFF – FOR GOOD
BRAZIL: A top referee has been banned for life for his part in a match-fixing scandal. **Page 16**

RIVER RUN DRY
ARGENTINA: River Plate have made their worst start to a season since the "short championships" were introduced in 1991. **Page 60**

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FRANCE: Monaco's new coach Francesco Guidolin must win over the doubters who question whether he has the relevant experience. **Page 51**

KLINSMANN IN THE DOCK

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SPAIN: Referees have come under fire as Real Madrid came out fighting in a row over alleged bias. **Page 12**

GULF SIDES SHOW THE GULF

ASIA: Defending champions Al Ittihad of Saudi Arabia and Al Ain of UAE easily saw off east Asian opponents in the Champions League semi-finals. **Page 64**

WORLD CUP COUNTDOWN
THE QUALIFIERS

The final rounds of qualifiers for next year's finals in Germany produced drama and nail-biting excitement across the regions. We now know 27 of the 32 finalists. Page 20

AFRICA
Angola
Ghana
Ivory Coast
Togo
Tunisia

ASIA
Iran
Japan
Saudi Arabia
South Korea

CONCACAF
Costa Rica
Mexico
United States

EUROPE
Croatia
England
France
Germany (hosts)
Holland
Italy
Poland
Portugal
Serbia & Montenegro
Sweden
Ukraine

SOUTH AMERICA
Argentina
Brazil
Ecuador
Paraguay

PLAY-OFFS
Norway v Czech Republic
Spain v Slovakia
Switzerland v Turkey
Trinidad & Tobago v Bahrain
Uruguay v Australia

● 22/09/05

Oops!...Jonathan Woodgate scores an own goal on his debut for Real Madrid and is later sent off

● 27/09/05

Oi, ref!...Werder Bremen captain Frank Baumann protests against a decision during his side's 2-1 Champions League defeat at Panathinaikos

● 28/09/05

Stalemate...Chelsea's Frank Lampard blocks Liverpool's Steven Gerrard and Djibril Cisse during their 0-0 Champions League draw

HEADLINERS

SEPP BLATTER

The FIFA president leaves many questions unanswered after his attack on English clubs and players

SEPP BLATTER CUT a remarkable swathe through the English Premiership with his assaults via the columns of the *Financial Times* and a BBC radio phone-in, but left more questions than answers in his effervescent wake.

FIFA's president – as the phone-in revealed to the fan in the street – is a personable, politically astute will o' the wisp who will never be tied down by the boring practicalities raised by his passionate denunciations of the evils of the game, from corrupt referees to "pornographic" investments.

On the plus side, Blatter is most evidently a football fan, which is more than can be said for many of the other "suits" who command the five-star lifestyle appropriate to the rulers of a worldwide authority more popular than the United Nations; on the minus count, FIFA's power to effect the changes that he says the game needs are comparatively minimal.

Blatter enunciated the concerns of many within the game by saying: "Just because football plays a very important part in our life – touching social, economic, cultural and political issues – does not mean we can close our eyes to the problems. Football is not only a vehicle for a lot of money but a focus for our emotions, and I cannot, as president of FIFA, close my eyes and say it's all good. In the leagues you see the richer become richer, while the poor become poorer, and this is not the solidarity we need or the drama."

'Blatter knows that a salary cap could not work and would, in any case, be prohibited under EU legislation'

Here, a credibility chasm yawns open because the clubs are not allowed to answer back. FIFA will not, for example, negotiate over problems such as national team compensation with G-14 or any other band of clubs. Clubs, according to strict application of Blatter's beloved pyramid procedure, are like Victorian children: they should be seen and not heard.

Blatter said: "I don't mind if a few clubs have a lot of money but they should not use it to take away the best players from smaller clubs. This is not solidarity. There are clubs – not only in the Premiership, which is outstanding, but also in Italy, Spain and a little bit less in Germany and France – who are taking more than the number of players they need to do well.

Speaking out...Blatter

"They take 25 to 30 top players or even more but they can only field 11 and three substitutes, so they are both depriving other clubs and fans and turning their league into merely a competition for the rich – and that is not correct. Football is all about hope: the hope that you can do better tomorrow. But if you have what is effectively a closed league then you are going to the American system, which is not right for our sport, because football is not only 'just' entertainment."

Blatter knows that a salary cap could not work and would, in any case, be prohibited under European Union legislation, though, for some reason, he still believes that a six/five nationality split is possible when it is not.

Maybe there is an answer out there somewhere, but if the privileged at the top refuse to talk directly to the masses then solutions will be longer, not sooner, in coming.

Blatter could not have illustrated the point better – though he did not recognise the screaming irony – when he related a conversation with Prince Andrew about footballers on £100,000 a week. The president, whose salary and professional expenses push him into the millionaire bracket, agreed with HRH's contention that this was immoral. Blatter, in his *FT* article, added the gratuitously insulting riders about some of these same footballers being "foul-mouthed" and "semi-educated". But they can all spot an easy target when they see it.

Keir Radnedge

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Gavin Hamilton – Editor

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● 08/10/05

Berth booked...Croatia celebrate qualification for the World Cup after beating Sweden 1-0 in Zagreb

● 11/10/05

Poll position...Liberian presidential candidate George Weah casts his vote

HEADLINERS

ANDERSON & GIOVANI DOS SANTOS

Latin American stars of the World Under-17 Championship

ALL BUT A HANDFUL of players in the World Under-17 Championship are still based in their home countries. This, of course, makes the tournament a magnet for scouts from the major European leagues.

Clubs from England, Italy, Spain, Holland, France, Portugal and Germany were all represented at the Peru finals, jostling for space in the stands or hunting for phone numbers in the team hotel.

But in the case of the tournament's two outstanding players, the army of envoys were too late. Anderson of Brazil and Mexico's Giovani Dos Santos have already been snapped up.

Snapped up...Anderson will join Porto while Dos Santos is at Barcelona

Anderson is still with Gremio, in Brazil's Second Division, but moves to Porto next year, while Dos Santos has been with Barcelona since 2001.

The Brazilian was chosen as player of the tournament, with the Mexican coming second. But the vote was conducted before their teams met in the Final. Had it taken place afterwards the result would probably have been reversed.

Dos Santos was the brains behind his side's 3-0 win, while Anderson hobbled out of the game after an early ankle injury.

Without him, Brazil would probably have fallen earlier. His virtues were best displayed against Turkey in the semi-final; strength, blistering acceleration, the capacity to run with the ball at pace over long distance, and to find a decisive pass at the end of it. Add the fact that his most decisive interventions came at times when his team needed it most, and it is clear Porto have done a fine piece of scouting.

'There is a touch of Brazilian magic about Dos Santos'

There is a touch of Brazilian magic in the Dos Santos make-up. He is the son of a Brazilian, known as Zizinho, who starred in Mexican football in the 1980s. Strongly built and with a cannonball right foot, he specialised in long-range goals.

His son is left-footed and much slighter. But he has terrific pace over the first 10 metres and a sharp brain that allows him to take defenders out with superbly-placed passes. He went through the tournament without scoring, but set up plenty goals for his team-mates.

Picked up by Barcelona in 2001 after shining at a tournament in France, Dos Santos has his sights set on a first-team debut next year. Barca already count on Argentina's Lionel Messi, star of the recent World Youth Cup, plus current FIFA Player of the Year Ronaldinho – making it a remarkable Latin American trio for the Catalan club.

Tim Vickery

Numbers game

£7.4bn...

the sum received by Millhouse Capital, Roman Abramovich's investment company, for the sale of oil company Sibneft back to the Russian state.

33,772...

the attendance at Turin's Stadio Delle Alpi (capacity 68,000) for the League game between Juventus and Internazionale.

3...

the number of coaches hired and fired by Cagliari so far this season.

60...

the number of people injured when fans stormed an already packed stadium in the northern Brazilian city of Belem to watch the national team train for their final World Cup qualifying match against Venezuela.

£740,000...

the bonus offered to the Angolan national team by their government for qualifying for the World Cup.

£21.2m...

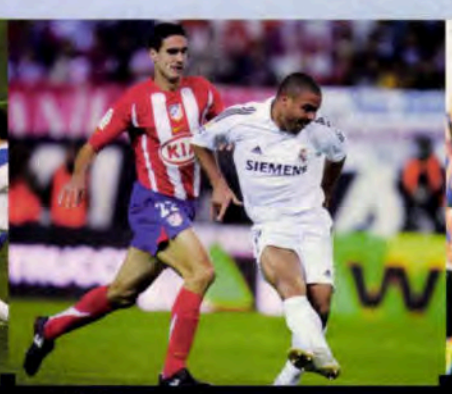
the amount owed in unpaid taxes by Diego Maradona from his time as a player with Napoli between 1985 and 1991.

11...

the number of years of a 43-year sentence served by Humberto Munoz, killer of former Colombian international Andres Escobar, before his release from jail last month.

● 12/10/05

1-0...Zinedine Zidane scores against Cyprus to put France on their way to World Cup qualification



● 15/10/05

Derby double...Ronaldo scores twice in the 3-0 win at Atletico Madrid that puts Real on top in the Spanish League

● 15/10/05

Right on track...Frank Lampard scores for runaway Premiership leaders Chelsea in their 5-1 come-from-behind victory over Bolton

WS WORLD SOCCER Brian Glanville

...on England's dismal World Cup prospects...the FA's paranoic Eriksson initiative...why Chelsea don't deserve more respect...and the problems Arsenal will face post-Bergkamp

AFTER ENGLAND HAD toiled to that wretchedly laborious win against Austria at Old Trafford, which I was unlucky enough to attend, Sven Goran Eriksson emitted all the predictable platitudes about what a great achievement it had been to reach the World Cup finals again and how optimistic he was. In fact, England had largely disgraced themselves in what was surely the least demanding European group.

The defeat in Northern Ireland in September would surely have seen Eriksson sacked in any other major footballing country, but of course he has that insane £4million contract, given him as a kind of disloyalty bonus by Mark Palios, the ineffable FA chief executive, after he had been caught red-handed dallying with Chelsea.

Palios' successor, the so far unconvincing Brian Barwick, had already and gratuitously declared that Eriksson would still be in office in 2008, heaven help us. Fortunately, there appears to be a clause that allows the FA to part with him by then.

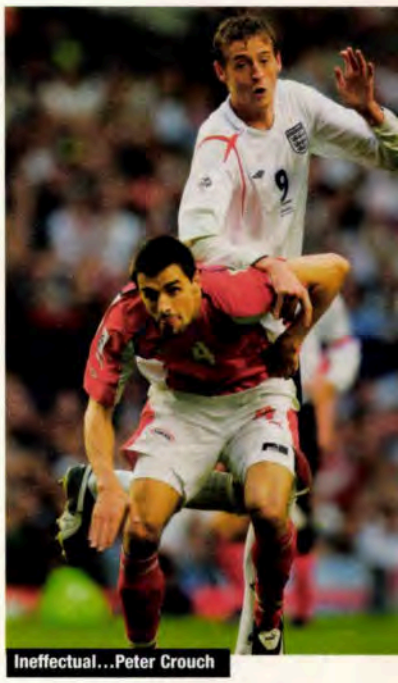
I see no reason for optimism about England's prospects in Germany under a manager who seems to demonstrate that nothing succeeds like failure. Under his aegis England have twice flopped out in the quarter-finals of major tournaments. His obsession with David Beckham has long become an incubus on the team, never more so than in the recent games against Wales and Northern Ireland, when Beckham was so ludicrously and disruptively deployed in deep midfield.

In Manchester, the cravenly negative Austrians should have been there for the taking. Had Hans Krankl not been manoeuvred out of the managerial job, England might well have been given a far harder task. In the Austrians' previous match, in Katowice, Krankl, with the team 2-0 down at half-time, boldly went to a 4-4-2 formation, sending on Austria Wien striker Roland Linz, who proceeded to take the Poles apart. He scored twice and near the end might have had a third when he struck the crossbar; that would have made it 3-3.

'The Northern Ireland defeat would surely have seen Eriksson sacked in any other major footballing country'

But though Linz started the game in Manchester, he was the lone striker until well into the second half. Even then, he nearly equalised when, snapping up the ball from John Terry's almost fatal back-header, he had a shot that Paul Robinson desperately turned on to the bar.

Showing his usual lack of flexibility and imagination, Eriksson kept the ineffectual Peter Crouch on the field when the game cried out for Darren Bent or Jermain Defoe to be sent on, even if Defoe to some extent replicates Michael Owen. You could hardly imagine Bent missing the easy heading chance that Crouch nodded gently at Jurgen Macho, the Austrians' bravely resourceful keeper.



Ineffectual...Peter Crouch

One of the sparse consolations of the Austrian affair was the surprising form of Luke Young, a team-mate of Bent at Charlton, who was standing in for the injured Gary Neville at right-back. Until this game, I confess to having been sceptical about Young's qualities as an international footballer, but in Manchester he seemed to gain real confidence, time and again propelling himself into vigorous attack. It was bizarre to read one criticism of him: that he failed to link with Beckham down the right, as Neville does. It

● 18/10/05

Record breaker...Thierry Henry becomes Arsenal's all-time top scorer after hitting both goals in the 2-0 win at Sparta Prague

● 18/10/05

On trial...German referee Robert Hoyzer (left) appears at a Berlin court to face match-fixing charges

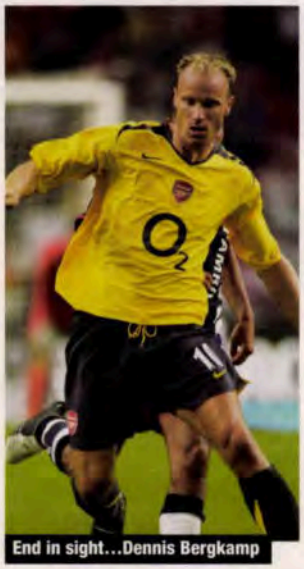
was, in fact, Crouch who tended to supply him, notably for one spectacular incursion worthy of any winger, when Young raced into the penalty area, only to be frustrated by a courageous dive at his feet by Macho. A free-kick was given against the right-back, but it had been a fine piece of initiative.

BIG BROTHER is watching you. What paranoiac decided to film press conferences by Sven Goran Eriksson under FA tutelage? What could possibly be gained from such a misbegotten stratagem? Is it an attempt to monitor every question and answer so that in the event of one or the other being misinterpreted or distorted, the FA can come down on the offender with magnum force? Or is it just a crude attempt at intimidation? What it will unquestionably do, simply by its perverse existence, is to poison relations between the press and the FA. Whatever the limitations of Brian Barwick in his new role as FA chief executive, surely as a former television executive he has some idea of how officialdom and the media can co-exist.

JOSE MOURINHO demanded Chelsea be treated with more "respect" after his team's 4-1 win at Liverpool, which was certainly more than a respectable result. But how much respect did Chelsea deserve with that meagre win at Wigan, that modest victory over Arsenal, that far from spectacular conquest of negative Anderlecht? After the latter game, we heard Mourinho, with no apparent sense of irony, praising his team for holding out in the final stages.

Meanwhile, Chelsea's billionaire owner, Roman Abramovich, has divested himself of his shares in the oil company Sibneft, though he is still being personally pursued in the Virgin Islands by Anglo-Russian company Sibir Energy, which is demanding a billion dollars, alleging that their 50 per cent share in a joint enterprise was surreptitiously reduced to 1 per cent

TALKING recently with Dennis Bergkamp at the Arsenal training ground in London Colney, he was adamant that, at the age of 36, this will be his last season with the Gunners. Then what will they do? Thierry Henry, who is now alleged to be contemplating joining Barcelona, is invaluable to the team, Bergkamp, with his ability to "invent the game", as the Italians say, simply irreplaceable. His importance was highlighted by Arsenal's frustrating match against



End in sight...Dennis Bergkamp

Birmingham City, when the Dutchman appeared only as a late substitute. Maik Taylor's goalkeeping was superb, but when Arsene Wenger said that, in such circumstances, Robin Van Persie's late deflected goal was the only way the Gunners were going to score, one sensed defeatism in the air. Post Dennis, what?

'How much respect did Chelsea deserve with that meagre win against Wigan?'

Notes & quotes

"From September 2000 Real Madrid have sent a sum every month to Ferenc Puskas."

A statement from the Spanish club attempts to set the record straight following reports that they had given little material help to their former Hungarian star, who has Alzheimer's disease.

"I've paid for that moment of stupidity and don't want to talk about it any more."

French international keeper Fabien Barthez returns to the field of play after serving a six-month suspension for spitting at a Moroccan referee during an exhibition game earlier this year.

"I'm staying with Besiktas."

Famous last words of coach Riza Calimbay, who resigned from the Istanbul club less than a fortnight later.

"If he's elected, he will make himself ridiculous because he doesn't have the basic capabilities to move in the intricate world of politics."

Ex-Liberia striker James Debbah forgets family ties, slamming the campaign of his cousin George Weah to become the president of the African nation.

"It's like I've been knocked down by a truck."

Former Italy and Juventus striker Toto Schillaci tells of his shock when hearing that Franco Scoglio, his former coach at Palermo, had died of a heart attack during a live football talk show.

"At Juve, coach Capello makes me feel like an important player. When I was with Ajax, you'd never hear the last of it if you made a mistake."

Swedish striker Zlatan Ibrahimovic contrasts life in Turin with Amsterdam.

Valued...Ibrahimovic

You must be joking…incredulous Atletico Madrid players surround referee Bernardino Gonzalez Vazquez as he sends off Antonio Lopez (out of picture) early in the city derby

Ref justice

Officials take the flak as Real Madrid come out fighting in a row over alleged bias

SID LOWE in Madrid

ONCE UPON A TIME, legend had it that Spain's referees were in cahoots with Real Madrid, that a powerful conspiracy sought to keep the capital's aristocrats loaded with trophies. Dodgy decisions were, it was said, the staple diet of Madrid's title successes. They were the government's team, the protected ones, "the greatest ministry we ever had," as one Francoist minister put it. Barcelona, the Catalan flagship, were repressed, so too the Basques. Madrid were kept buoyant.

Even Madrid's famous chant *"Asi, asi, asi gana el Madrid"* [that's how Madrid win], sung after a particularly great goal, was appropriated by opposition fans, launched into after a particularly bad decision in Madrid's favour – a decision that was never a mistake, of course, but another indication of the conspiracy. It was mostly rubbish, of course, but that was what they said.

How times have changed. These days, the Madrid press are convinced (or say they are convinced) that there is a conspiracy against Real Madrid and that the federation has decided Barcelona will win the League by decree.

Far more damagingly, Madrid themselves seem to agree. Which is quite a turnaround for a club who have long insisted that they are a gentlemanly outfit who never complain about referees, a club whose president, Florentino Perez, even distributed a book of etiquette to all the players a couple of years ago, complete with bold text and capital letters on particularly important passages.

The book beseeches the players to be "elegant of spirit", and turn the other cheek, saying: "We are a winning team, but we must always WIN WELL. When Real Madrid loses, its players shake hands with their opponents. Protesting to referees…leads nowhere, deteriorates our image as a gentleman club and is a clear sign of weakness. Real Madrid does not complain. No comments are made regarding the referee. This is never done."

The inference was clear – Madrid have class, unlike those Barca

fans for ever whingeing about referees, endlessly banging on about conspiracies, or those cry-baby Valencia fans whose local paper once ran a front cover that showed a plate of chorizo, because Spain's spicy sausage is also slang for thief. Madrid never complain about referees. Never, never, never.

Oh dear. Two years without a trophy have put paid to that policy, the days of turning the other cheek have gone (if they ever really existed). And they've gone because the conspiracy is now an anti-Madrid one. Or so they say.

Barcelona benefit

Last Christmas, Madrid and Barcelona agreed to vote for the same presidential candidate at the federation's elections, only for Barca's Joan Laporta to change his mind and vote for Angel Maria Villar, the incumbent. Villar won and Barca have benefited from some debatable decisions since – no coincidence, say the press.

"We have to denounce this, it's shameful!" chirped *AS*. *Marca* agreed, raving: "Above all errors, there is a clear tendency: Barcelona have to be champions. They have always had referee's complicity, on occasion clear and shameful, on others more whispering and disgraceful."

Everyone knows the Madrid press is partisan, just as their Catalan colleagues are. But what makes current conspiracy talk worrying is that Real Madrid have joined in – not just by guiding the coverage of the Madrid press, already the club's semi-official mouthpieces, but via their own media.

At the back end of last season, the club's website, Realmadrid.com, published an article entitled "The Seven Deadly Sins of [Spain's refereeing chief] Sanchez Arminio" after a match against Villarreal in which referee Bernardino Gonzalez Vazquez sent off two Madrid players. Real Madrid Television chipped in with talk of "indignation", "disgrace" and the "shame" of the referee's "clear attempt to damage Real Madrid".

They have not stopped since. As decisions – some of them extremely dubious – continue to go Barcelona's way this season, RMTV and Realmadrid.com have become littered with facile and often deeply unfair references to referees. It has become an outright campaign. One news bulletin opened on the line: "Real Madrid have one more opponent to beat in this year's League – the referees." Neither the sentiment nor the phraseology was unusual.

They did have grounds for complaint, though. Against Celta Vigo, Madrid were beaten by a shot that did not cross the line, and at Espanyol the referee blew for a foul by Sergio Ramos (which would have given Espanyol a penalty and possibly resulted in a red card), only to wrongly allow the goal to stand. Madrid lost 1-0.

Madrid reacted by announcing that they were studying the possibility of demanding that the game be declared null and void. They even produced a dossier outlining their argument, complete with reports – from *Marca* and *AS*, of course – proving they had a case.

After a week in which everyone held their breath, Perez gave a press conference. "Out of respect for Espanyol and the referee, we are not going to expunge the game," he said. "We are trying to help improve refereeing in Spain by bringing this to everyone's attention. We only ask that the referees do not allow themselves to be influenced by anyone."

The "except Real Madrid" went without saying. And so it proved – at least, that's the way Atletico Madrid saw it after they had a penalty given against them and Antonio Lopez sent off after just six minutes of the city derby by Gonzalez Vazquez, the referee from the Real-Villarreal game. Real went on to beat Atletico 3-0.

Atletico's complaints were not without foundation after Real's website had, seven days before, begun its derby build-up by describing Gonzalez Vazquez as "the Seven Deadly Sins ref" and "a well-known Barcelona fan".

Cranking up pressure

Atletico accused Real Madrid of inciting violence and, more importantly, of further cranking up the pressure on the referee. Dare he go against Madrid now? So great was the intensity of the campaign that Gonzalez Vazquez may well have been subconsciously influenced – he certainly knew he would have been pilloried had he not blown the way he did. "The tactic worked for Real Madrid," ranted the match report on Atletico's website. "These days, it seems you have to whinge to get what you want," sniped Atletico captain Fernando Torres, while defender Pablo Ibanez trotted out the Spanish saying: "He who doesn't cry, doesn't get to suckle."

Refereeing in Spain is a thankless task – every decision is scrutinised minutely, the press make judgements based on their own partisan agendas, diving is just another polished and applauded skill, and players are for ever demanding cards for opponents. And now this. No wonder the referees have finally snapped.

"We're sick of this," announced Eduardo Iturralde Gonzalez, Alfonso Perez Burrull and Alberto Undiano Mallenco on behalf of Spain's referees. "There has been a spiral of aggressive accusations made against us, causing irreparable damage to refereeing and to Spanish football. Everything we do is used against us – even when we keep our mouths shut, people say we are manipulated and fearful.

"Our mistakes are magnified to such a degree that people accuse us of deliberately manipulating the League. But we are independent and will not be dictated to by anyone. We will not allow ourselves to be influenced, certainly not by certain clubs and certain media."

Alas, there is little chance of anyone taking much notice. Even the statement was reported with the necessary spin, depending on who you read, or not reported at all. And who here is going to let something as boring as a mistake or a referee's self-esteem get in the way of a handy excuse, a useful scapegoat or a good old-fashioned story of theft, conspiracy and political campaigning?

'Real Madrid have one more opponent to beat this year – the referees'

The club's own television channel jumps on the conspiracy bandwagon

What a bug...the Brazilian "cockroach" routine

"If opposition players celebrated like that in front of me, I would have felt humiliated and provoked," said Real Madrid defender Ivan Helguera when asked about the choreographed goal celebrations of his Brazilian team-mates Ronaldo, Robinho, Roberto Carlos and Julio Baptista. The "cockroach" routine, where they lay on the floor waving their arms and legs in the air, was just one of a series of celebrations by Real Madrid's Brazilian contingent that has not been fully appreciated by the rest of the team.

Alex the great

Del Piero's return to form boosts the *Azzurri's* World Cup striking options

PADDY AGNEW in Rome

FOR ITALY, qualification for the World Cup finals is the norm. Or so said well-satisfied national team coach Marcello Lippi in the wake of an all-too-predictable triumph in Group 5.

At first glance, Lippi has good reason to be pleased. For the first time since Enzo Bearzot's side in 1981, Italy qualified for the World Cup with a game in hand. A hard-earned 1-0 win against Slovenia in Palermo on October 8 saw them home, affording Lippi the luxury of being able to treat the final game against Moldova in Lecce as a friendly in which to give the "reserves" a run out.

But despite the ease with which Italy qualified, there are major doubts about whether this side can follow in the glorious footsteps of Bearzot's team and win next summer's World Cup. For a start, their domination of the qualifying group owed more to the modest quality of the opposition (Norway, Scotland, Slovenia, Belarus and Moldova) than to stratospheric football from the *Azzurri*.

With a view to Germany 2006, Italy's relatively poor form away to their three "strongest" group opponents is less than encouraging – they lost to Slovenia and drew with both Norway and Scotland. Even the return win over Slovenia did not impress everyone as Italy struggled before substitute defender Cristiano Zaccardo scrambled home a 78th-minute winner.

In truth, though, Italy ought to have had the game wrapped up by half-time. Strikers Alberto Gilardino and Luca Toni were guilty of poor finishing as playmaker Francesco Totti, on one of his better nights for Italy, set up a series of chances for them. Furthermore, Toni's form was completely undermined by the fiercely hostile reception afforded him by the Palermo fans, still furious at his summer move to Fiorentina.

Totti himself shaved a post with one excellent effort while a seemingly valid 38th-minute goal from Gilardino was overruled when French assistant referee Nelly Viennot deemed that Fabio Grosso's cross had gone out of play. In the end, though, Italy stuck at it and eventually ground out the win.

Analysing the game next morning, Lippi conceded that his side's

Ouch, that hurt...Del Piero winces after colliding with Moldovan goalkeeper Serghei Pascenco during an inspirational performance in Italy's 2-1 win

performance had been less than brilliant, but suggested we can expect to see more of the same in Germany. In that case, this Italian side will gain few friends as they remorselessly grind out results rather than attempt to win games with flair.

Lippi argued that if he had the national team under his tutelage every day, all season long, he could work on specific problems. Given that he gets to coach them only every two or three months, he believes his first priority has been to form a solid group of players who will work hard and play hard for one another and for him.

Not surprisingly, though, in that same context, he has floated the idea of organising a couple of squad training sessions, perhaps in January and February, during which he would be free to work on technical/tactical considerations without the pressure of an imminent big match.

If the Slovenia game was inevitably a tense affair, the same cannot be said of the 2-1 win over Moldova in the final group match. With the pressure off, Lippi turned to his shadow squad, fielding goalkeeper Morgan De Sanctis, central defender Daniele Bonera, midfielders Simone Barone and Aimo Diana, as well as striker Vincenzo Iaquinta. The most significant performance, however, came from the most famous of the reserves, Alessandro Del Piero.

These days Del Piero sees a lot of the substitutes' bench. Fabio Capello, his coach at Juventus, considers him his third-choice striker, behind David Trezeguet and Zlatan Ibrahimovic. Lippi, his former coach at Juventus, appears to consider him behind Gilardino, Totti, Toni, Iaquinta and Christian Vieri.

Motivator Lippi

Lippi added a little spice to the anti-climactic Moldova game by suggesting beforehand that Del Piero was by no means guaranteed a squad place for Germany next summer. No doubt he knew just what he was doing. If his words were intended to motivate Del Piero, they had the desired effect.

Playing in ideal circumstances, in a pressure-free match against relatively modest opposition, Del Piero responded to the call in the best possible manner, running the game from his position just behind the front pairing of Vieri and Iaquinta. He took on players, set up a goal for Vieri, hit the bar with a piledriver of a free-kick and was rarely off the ball in an unexpectedly aggressive display.

By and large, for one night at least, Del Piero managed to look a reasonable replica of the astonishingly talented 19-year-old whose arrival at Juventus 10 years ago was enough to persuade the club they could sell Roberto Baggio to make room for him.

In case anyone thought it was merely a last hurrah, Del Piero was at it again three nights later, scoring the only goal of Juventus' League meeting with Sicilians Messina. He robbed Ivory Coast defender Marco Zoro on the halfway line before making a majestic run past two defenders and slotting home, to provide another reminder of the Good Old Days.

After the Moldova game Lippi said he had been "well pleased" with Del Piero. The forward commented: "All I need is the chance to play."

Del Piero's good form means he has made Lippi's attacking options look all the stronger – apart from those forwards already mentioned, there are also outsiders such as Fabrizio Miccoli, Davide Di Michele and Vincenzo Montella. But the coach must be concerned about the lack of cover in other areas of his team. For instance, Lippi could be in serious difficulties if either of his first-choice central defenders, Fabio Cannavaro and Alessandro Nesta, are unavailable.

Cassano set to go

Del Piero's return to form could not have been better timed, given the problems afflicting yet another player who might keep him out of the squad, Roma's Antonio Cassano. In mid-October, Roma and Cassano appeared to have arrived at a definitive parting of the ways when the club announced their "tolerance" of the player was over.

With Cassano's contract due to run out in June 2006, both parties have been involved in negotiations for the best part of the past nine months. Cassano's deal is worth an annual £2.2million after tax. Last February, the club offered him a new five-year contract worth £16m. However, after the player and his representatives rejected it, Roma came back in the summer with a greatly reduced offer worth £11m – about the same as his current deal.

If that means take it or leave it, all that remains to be decided is when Cassano goes and where. If he leaves next June, he would be a free agent, thus representing a serious loss to Roma, who bought him for £17m from Bari in the summer of 2001. A more mutually acceptable option would be for Cassano to leave during the January transfer window. That way, Roma would get some return on their big outlay, and Cassano, currently injured but presumably out of the Roma first team anyway even if he were not, would get a chance to play again and put forward a case for inclusion in the World Cup squad. His future now looks to be with Juventus, Milan or Internazionale.

Roma have not been doing fantastically well without him. Following a 1-0 defeat at Empoli, they were only 14th in the table with just eight points from seven games, 13 behind runaway leaders Juventus.

Still going strong...Paolo Maldini

This continues to be an extraordinary season for 37-year-old Paolo Maldini. Against Treviso on September 25 he overtook Dino Zoff in the all-time Serie A appearances chart when playing his 571st game, all of them for Milan. It was the second time Maldini had overhauled Zoff in an "all time" list since he is the most-capped Italian international with 126, 14 ahead of the former keeper. Despite knee problems, Maldini still looks lively on the pitch, scoring the first brace of his 21-season career in Milan's 2-1 win against Reggina in early October. When he finally opts to hang up his boots, however, it may not be the end of the Maldini-Milan connection. His nine-year-old son Christian recently signed up with the club's youth system.

'Lippi added a little spice by suggesting Del Piero was not guaranteed a World Cup place'

Sent off – for good

A top referee has been banned for life for his part in a match-fixing scandal

BRIAN HOMEWOOD in Rio de Janeiro

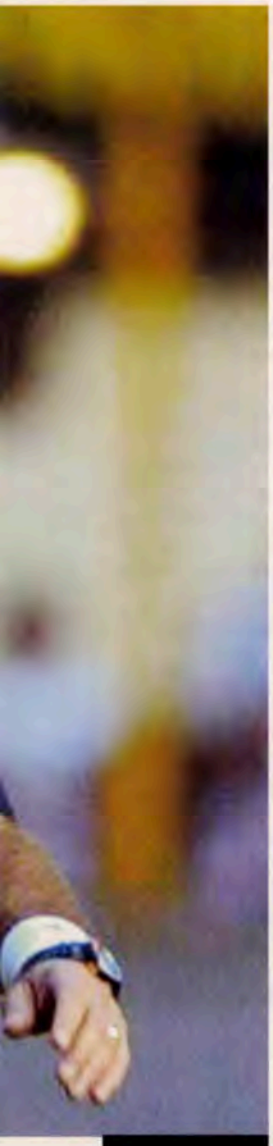
EDILSON PEREIRA DE CARVALHO, one of Brazil's 10 FIFA referees, was best known until recently for his curious pre-match ritual in which he would kiss his yellow and red cards – with the words "God is faithful" inscribed on the back – raise them to the sky and pray. However, Carvalho's famous cards have now been replaced by a pair of handcuffs. The 43-year-old's career came to an abrupt end when federal police swooped on his house and arrested him on suspicion of taking money from a gambling ring to swing the results of matches.

Carvalho was immediately suspended, along with Paulo Jose Danelon, a Second Division referee also suspected of manipulating results. The good news was that Carvalho co-operated with police and it quickly emerged that only those two referees had been contaminated. The bad news was that Carvalho had already refereed 11 matches in this year's Brazilian championship.

Carvalho, who was subsequently given a life ban, said he had first been contacted by the gambling ring in September last year and had initially said no. However, faced with debts of around £10,000, he could no longer resist the temptation and in February helped America-Sao Jose to a 4-1 win over Palmeiras in the Paulista (Sao Paulo state) championship in return for £2,500. "There was a penalty for Palmeiras which I didn't give," he said on Globo television after being released by police. "I ignored it and I sinned."

A week later, Carvalho accepted another bribe to help Corinthians beat Guarani in the same competition. Corinthians won 3-0 and the referee said he did not even need to interfere: "I didn't have to do anything and I got 10,000 Real [£2,500]."

Encouraged by that easy money, Carvalho carried on in the Brazilian championship. Once he knew which game he was refereeing, Carvalho would ring his contact, businessman and former kart driver Nagib Fayad, and offer to swing the game one way or the other. Sometimes he would ring up Fayad from his



Bad decision... Carvalho is paying the price for his involvement with a gambling ring

dressing-room less than an hour before kick-off.

Both Fayad and Carvalho were held in custody at the federal police's Sao Paulo headquarters for five days before being released. They and Danelon, who was questioned but not detained, face charges of fraud, conspiracy and crimes against the economy. Meanwhile, Armando Marques, who had been head of the Brazilian federation's refereeing department since a previous scandal in 1997, resigned.

"I was corrupted, I allowed myself to get taken by this easy money," Carvalho said in the Globo television interview, for which he is believed to have charged £3,750. "I did it because I wanted to. I was seduced and I was wrong. I know I am never going to referee another game again, whether it be a kick-around in the park or a professional match. I'm finished."

Carvalho said on one occasion he was supposed to help home side Juventude beat Figueirense but was thwarted by an outstanding performance from Edmundo. The former Brazil forward scored a hat-trick for the visitors, while Juventude also missed a penalty, as Figueirense won 4-1. On other occasions, the referee failed to reach a deal with the gambling ring and was left to officiate the game "normally".

This is where it got complicated for Brazil's disciplinary tribunal, responsible for deciding what to do about the 11 games. Should they void them all or just the ones where he confessed to swinging the result? In the end, the tribunal's president Luiz Zveiter decided for the former and ordered all 11 fixtures to be replayed. "This is the least traumatic solution," he said.

Perhaps it was, but the timing of Zveiter's announcement was dreadful as it came on a Sunday morning, halfway through the 29th round of games. The result was that Internacional, who had been one point clear of Corinthians and Fluminense and four ahead of Goias at the start of the weekend, were knocked off the top of the table as they lost their three points from the 3-2 win over Coritiba.

Fluminense also lost the points from their 3-0 win over Brasiliense. In the meantime, Goias, who were not involved in any of Carvalho's matches, had beaten Ponte Preta 4-1 in a Saturday game and leapfrogged both teams into second place.

By an unhappy coincidence, Internacional and Fluminense met four hours after Zveiter's announcement in a match that should have been between the leaders and the third-placed side but was now between the third and fourth-placed teams. They drew 2-2.

The big "winners" amid all this were Corinthians, who had two games officiated by Carvalho, lost them both (3-2 to Sao Paulo and 4-2 to Santos), but had now been given the chance to win back six points. A 3-2 win over bottom club Brasiliense suddenly put Corinthians top of the table, three points clear of Goias and with two games in hand.

All this came in the middle of what had developed into the best championship since Brazil, finally and grudgingly, adopted the conventional league format in 2003. Attendances were up 75 per cent on last year, goals were also up and fouls were down.

At first, the clubs took the result annulments surprisingly well, although there were murmurings from struggling Flamengo that maybe it would be fair to abolish relegation this year. However, that quickly changed when the replays began and teams who had initially won their matches failed to win second time round. Juventude, who originally beat Fluminense 2-0, lost 4-3, Cruzeiro were held 2-2 by Botafogo, having won 4-1 first time round, and Vasco da Gama, who had beaten Figueirense 2-1 initially, drew 3-3. Vasco president Eurico Miranda demanded a second replay, claiming that referee Carlos Simon had made two critical errors that both favoured Figueirense. TV replays proved Miranda right since they showed Simon had disallowed a legitimate Romario goal for Vasco, then allowed Figueirense's third goal to stand even though the ball had gone out of play during the build-up. Simon was suspended for two games but Miranda did not get his replay.

'I allowed myself to get taken by this easy money. I was seduced and I was wrong. I'm finished'

Referee Carvalho acknowledges his misdemeanours

Magic words?...Parreira with Ronaldo

Carlos Alberto Parreira has banned the word magic in the run-up to next year's World Cup. The national team coach said that while he would keep his ultra-attacking line-up, with the use of any four players from Robinho, Ronaldo, Ronaldinho, Kaka and Adriano, he would not be calling it the "Magic Quartet", the name favoured by the Brazilian media.

"The word magic is not part of our vocabulary," Parreira said after Brazil's final qualifying game, a 3-0 win over Venezuela. "We're not getting involved in this sort of talk. I want to hear words like efficiency, productivity, winning well, sweat, perspiration and talent."

Mayhem at Santos

The real fun and games came the following night as Corinthians replayed their game away to defending champions Santos. The home side, who had lost the services of Robinho since the original staging, were clearly resentful and the game kicked off in a tense atmosphere. Trouble started when striker Luizao came on as a substitute for Santos, who were 2-1 ahead, and got himself sent off for elbowing after less than a minute and without having kicked the ball. Nilmar made it 2-2, then referee Cleber Wellington Abede awarded Corinthians a controversial penalty for an innocuous challenge by Ze Elias on Nilmar. Carlos Alberto converted, then, from the kick-off, Santos midfielder Giovanni deliberately hoofed the ball into the crowd in an act of protest. Soon afterwards, Carlos Alberto clashed with Santos goalkeeper Saulo, other players joined in, Santos fans invaded the pitch and the match was abandoned.

In the confusion that followed, Corinthians coach Antonio Lopes claimed he was pelted with cups of urine from the terraces while rampaging supporters wrecked television commentary boxes and vandalised cars and buildings outside the stadium.

"We're going to try and make sure we never have to play here again," said Corinthians vice-president Andres Sanchez.

All fired up

The Real Madrid and Brazil forward talks exclusively to Brian Homewood

Is it true you're quitting international football after the 2006 World Cup?
Maybe there was a wrong interpretation of an interview I gave to Spanish television in which I said I had been playing for the national team for a long time and maybe it was time to start thinking about stopping. I didn't mean that I would quit Brazil in 2006. My aim has always been that I will keep playing for Brazil and keep playing football while I get pleasure from doing so. It's not about a certain date, a certain period. For as long as I'm getting pleasure from playing football – and I still am – I will be available for the Brazil team.

How long might that be? Romario, for example, is 39 and doesn't want to stop.
Romario's an exception because he's still playing at that age, and he still wants to play, but I'm not thinking of playing that long.

You went to the 1994 World Cup as a 17-year-old for the experience and didn't get to play. In 1998, everything was overshadowed by your problems. 2002 was the redemption. What can we expect from Ronaldo in 2006?
2006 is the reconfirmation. After going to three World Cups, losing to France in the 1998 Final, then winning and playing very well in 2002, now this is where I assert myself. I'm very keen, I'm very motivated for this World Cup and I hope to help win another title for Brazil.

Hernan Crespo said that he is happy that Brazil are the favourites this time, rather than Argentina...
This doesn't determine anything. The choice of favourites is something that happens off the field and I've never seen anyone win anything off the field. Brazil have to prove on the pitch that we are the best.

Do you regret missing the Confederations Cup?
This has all been settled, as far as I'm concerned it's water under the bridge. I fought for my idea, for my choice. I fought to have my holidays respected, otherwise one season would have run into the other and in the year before the World Cup this would have been complicated. The players don't have time to unwind. In Europe we have two competitions that are very important – the Spanish championship and the Champions League – and this gives you very little time to recover.

Do you think FIFA, UEFA and the national federations should listen to the players over fixture congestion?
The right thing would be for the players' opinions to be heard. We're the ones who put on the show, we go on to the field, we play every weekend – sometimes twice a week – so it should be important to hear what we've got to say. This doesn't happen at the moment, unfortunately, because the players' profession is not united and so not many people listen to us. When they draw up the calendar, the least important aspect is the physical condition of the players. Nobody worries about whether we can complete a year playing three competitions; other things are more important.

Do you foresee any surprises in Germany, like at Euro 2004, when Greece won with ultra-defensive tactics?
It's very unlikely at the World Cup. You might get the odd upset in the first round, maybe one of the favourites getting knocked out, but I think the favourites are the same as usual – Brazil, Argentina, France, Germany, Italy. The African teams have improved greatly but there's still a long way to go before they can be considered title contenders.

Do you find South American opponents more difficult than European ones?
We have to be ready to face any team, we have to play our game regardless of whom we're playing. Most of the top players are in Europe so we have a pretty good idea of how everyone plays. It's true that the South American players, in particular the Argentinians and Uruguayans, use more gamesmanship and always try to provoke their opponents into losing their temper and getting a red card. These two countries are the specialists in provocation, let's say.

What sort of things do they get up to?
When the ball's up the other end of the field, they kick you from behind, they insult your mother, they do everything they can to provoke you.

How do you feel about the use of technology in football – for example, wearing earpieces so the coach can speak to you during the game and artificial pitches?
In relation to the earpiece, I don't see any advantage in this. Apart from being uncomfortable in the ear, it doesn't really alter anything. On the pitch the most important thing, apart from being well-positioned tactically, is to carry out what you have done during the week in training. Usually, it's the quality of the player that decides things, not the coach telling you whether it's the right moment to take on the defender or not. In my case, I'm not very keen on the artificial pitch, although this could change. I trained a lot on artificial pitches in Italy, during their winter for example, and the impact is much greater on the joints. I don't know what it's like now, whether it has evolved or if they've made the artificial turf with greater absorption for the joints, but I prefer the ordinary turf. Even if the pitch is a little bad, I prefer it.

What about "intelligent" balls?
A much easier and more viable solution for this type of situation would be to have more referees. In basketball, which has fewer players on the court, you have several officials controlling the game; we have just two linesmen and the referee. It would be much easier to put a linesman behind the goal or next to the post and this would sort out a lot of problems. You don't really need anyone else on the pitch itself because the referee is always in good shape, he is always close to the game, but he needs more assistants to help him, to spot things he can't see.

'World Cup 2006 is reconfirmation, it is where I assert myself'

Last week a magazine photographed you flying a kite on the veranda of your flat. How do you feel about fame and your privacy?
Well, I've been famous since I was 16 and so I'm completely used to this. It's got its good side and its bad side. Sometimes you want to go out and you attract lots of attention. When it's children, the elderly, when people are polite, it's nice attention, it's enjoyable. But a lot of people don't know how to approach you in an educated manner, and then it becomes a pain. They think that because we're famous, we play football and we're well paid, then we have to put up with everything. But there's a limit for everything and, as well as being footballers, we're normal people and we want to have a life as well.

Do footballers deserve their huge salaries?
I don't see why not. We are entertainers, we provide joy and happiness for a lot of people.

Football is a business that generates millions and millions of dollars and the players are the biggest stars, so we must be well paid to do this.

There's another side – you also do humanitarian work.

I've been a United Nations ambassador for eight years and I'm very active with a lot of missions. I would like more players to take part in these things – there are plenty taking part today, but it's still not enough. As superstars of our profession, we are in a position to pass on positive messages and we have credibility, so this type of social work is important. Footballers should use their image to pass on positive messages.

Brazilian players seem to get more involved in this sort of work.

Maybe we Brazilian players, knowing about the difficulties faced in our country, are more aware that this is important, but I see a lot of foreign players doing it as well. [Zinedine] Zidane is a UN ambassador along with myself, and we arrange a game every year with the friends of Zidane in which we raise money, to donate to institutions that the United Nations chooses. There are a lot of good people wanting to help.

Is there any jealousy of the Brazilian group of players at Real Madrid? From Raul, for example?

It's impossible to expect every player to get on well with every other player at a club. But we have a very good group at Real Madrid and we are all aware that the club is the most important thing. It's not obligatory for the players to be friends, but on the field we have to be a team and everyone has to help everyone else. I haven't seen any signs of jealousy, I certainly have a good relationship with Raul and we always look to do our best to help Real Madrid.

How do you see the political scandals in Brasilia?

Brazil is a very large, complicated country and, unfortunately, I live a very long way from there now so I'm not really qualified to comment. But I know that people are following what is happening very closely – the fraud, the corruption. The people will want answers, this is very important. I want to be part of a dignified country.

How do you feel about turning 30 next year?

Time passes very quickly. It seems like yesterday that I was 17 and going to my first World Cup. Now I'm 29, but I'm really well. I've got the same young spirit as ever.

AFRICA

Mark Gleeson reports on an extraordinary final weekend of qualifiers across the African continent

Regime change

IT WAS A VERITABLE charge of the light brigade on the final weekend of World Cup qualifiers as the existing order of African football went tumbling.

The revolution had been threatened for several months, but none of the supposed lightweights were sure of their places at the finals in Germany until the last round of matches. But after a day of high drama, Angola, Ghana, Ivory Coast and Togo all emerged as first-time qualifiers for the World Cup, to be joined later the same evening by Tunisia after yet another highly combustible match-up with north African rivals Morocco.

While Ghana and the Ivorians might have some reputable claim – and decent hopes of being able to achieve something next June – Angola and Togo have come from nowhere to book their place in the 32-team finals field. By eliminating Nigeria and Senegal respectively, they have turned the old established order on its head and levelled an African playing field that has for so long been dominated by a handful of nations.

While all the groups went down to the wire, and in some cases were decided only in the final few minutes, it was a miss rather than a goal that proved the most dramatic moment of the qualifying campaign.

Cameroon had catapulted themselves back to the top of Group 3, ahead of Ivory Coast by a point, after beating their rivals 3-2 away in September, their fourth qualifying victory in succession. So a win at home in their final match, against Egypt in Yaounde, would have booked the Indomitable Lions an African record sixth trip to the finals. And it looked to be well within their capabilities when Sporting Lisbon's Rudolph Douala put them ahead midway through the first half.

But for all their attacking acumen, Cameroon can be atrocious in defence and a moment of inattention allowed Mohamed Shawky to slip in for an Egyptian equaliser in the last 10 minutes.

It set up a dramatic final passage of play, and in the five minutes of added time Cameroon piled on the pressure, with substitute Pius N'Diefi missing a sitter and the panicky Egyptian defence even conspiring to hit their own bar.

Then Malian referee Koman Coulibaly generously gave Cameroon a penalty after N'Diefi went to ground in the box. Up stepped set-piece specialist Pierre Wome to take the kick, but although he struck it well enough it veered too far right, hit the upright and bounced away for a goal kick. Seconds later the final whistle sounded, silencing the stunned 50,000 crowd at the Amadou Ahidjo stadium.

The Ivorians had already ended their match in Sudan with a 3-1 win and were waiting in the middle of the pitch, surrounding a cameraman connected on his mobile phone with a friend in Abidjan watching the Cameroon game. The final whistle in Yaounde sparked mass celebrations on the pitch in Omdurman and throughout Ivory Coast.

Ivorian surprise

The Ivorians felt they had blown their chance after their defeat by Cameroon, a fact reflected in their decision to make seven changes to their usually consistent starting line-up for the Sudan game. So the joy at qualifying was mixed with a good dose of surprise.

"I thought it was all over when I heard Cameroon had been awarded a penalty," said Ivory Coast coach Henri Michel, vilified one month earlier after the defeat by their group rivals. "And although it was just a couple of moments, it felt like an eternity until we heard that they had missed it. I felt it was sporting justice."

The Ivorians' triumph prompted the government to send two jets to pick up the team to return for celebrations in Abidjan. But, pointedly, Michel went straight back to his home in Lebanon, smug in the knowledge of his achievement but still bitter about the fierce criticism.

'I thought it was all over when I heard Cameroon had been awarded a penalty. It felt like an eternity until we heard they had missed it' *Ivory Coast coach Henri Michel*

The nightmare of the penalty miss will surely haunt Wome. Reports that the Internazionale player's house had been attacked and his Mercedes damaged by angry youths were later denied, but he snapped back when expected penalty-taker Samuel Eto'o claimed he had not taken the kick because Wome had said he wanted to take it.

Entry of the gladiators...it's hardly the open-top bus routine

Eto'o told the Spanish press on his return to club side Barcelona that he had been about to do the honours when "Wome came up to me and said he was really confident about scoring".

Wome's version is somewhat different. "No one, neither Samuel nor our captain [Rigobert Song], wanted to take the penalty," he said. "We all knew what could happen if we missed. They were on the field with me and they know what happened – that's why Eto'o's lies hurt me."

The two will have to thrash it out when they meet up again at the African Nations Cup finals in Egypt in January, a tournament for which coach Artur Jorge has kept his job.

Looking towards the World Cup finals, Michel said: "If we continue with our progress we'll be able to show something. But my team lacks experience against real quality opposition. The only big adversary we have played against was France in August and we lost 3-0."

but the Ivory Coast team still enjoy a heroes' welcome from the fans in Abidjan after reaching the World Cup finals at last

Ghana qualified impressively, winning their last four games to finish comfortably top of Group 2. Driven by the midfield duo of captain Stephen Appiah and Chelsea's Michael Essien, the Black Stars finally broke their World Cup hoodoo. They have won the African Nations Cup four times, but never reached the world finals.

Only a calamity would have deprived them of qualification in the last round – they would have had to lose, and DR Congo win by some margin in South Africa – but the Ghanaians left nothing to chance, beating Cape Verde Islands 4-0 away.

The irony is that the current generation of relatively unknown Ghanaian players – Essien and Appiah apart – have been able to achieve what many high-profile teams of the past failed to do.

The only other well-known Ghanaian – Roma's ex-Bayern Munich defender Samuel Kuffour – has been out of the national team after a dispute with coach Ratomir Dujkovic at the beginning of the year. The Serbian coach, though, seemingly has a magical touch with African sides, having steered minnows Rwanda to the last African Nations Cup finals in Tunisia.

While the qualification of Ivory Coast and Ghana was not wholly unexpected, that of Angola and Togo is the stuff of fairytales. Angola's beleaguered populace, virtually out on their feet after three decades of civil war, now have something to cheer after the heroics of their footballers, while Togo, with just four million people, defied all expectations by seeing off Senegal, quarter-finalists at the last World Cup.

Togo coach Stephen Keshi is the mastermind of the success, having moulded a team from a limited pool of players and taken them on a run of nine unbeaten matches to first place in Group 1.

"From the start of the campaign we have totally modified the approach and attitude of a group of players," Keshi explained. "We persuaded them to

I don't believe it...Cameroon's Achille Webo

We've got the T-shirts...Ghana anticipate next summer's trip to Germany after victory in the Cape Verde Islands

believe in their own qualities." Belief is one thing, but the 10 goals from Monaco striker Emmanuel Adebayor were just as important to Togo's progress.

World Cup qualification is, save for the occasional coup d'etat, arguably the biggest thing to happen in the west African country's history. A national holiday was called and the players flown home to an ecstatic reception at the Kegue stadium in Lome two days after they had beaten Congo 3-2 away in Brazzaville in their last qualifier.

Togo had needed only a draw to go through but twice had to come from a goal behind before exceeding their target by taking all three points.

Angola, tied on points with Nigeria in Group 4 but on top because of a better head-to-head record, had to win away to Rwanda, assuming that Nigeria beat Zimbabwe at home.

The Nigerians duly did so, and emphatically, 5-1, and the Angolans looked increasingly panicky as news of the goal deluge in Abuja filtered through, while they were failing to create any chances against a gritty Rwandan team in Kigali.

It seemed the burden of expectation might be just too much for the Black Antelopes as the time ticked away and they were restricted to long-range shooting on a bone-dry pitch. But then captain Akwa, scorer of more than 30 goals for his country over the past decade, headed home the winner with 10 minutes left to ensure a fairytale finish.

Drama in Tunis

Angola were the first African side to book their place in Germany because their match kicked off an hour earlier than the deciders in Groups 1, 2 and 3. The last kick-off was late in the evening, in Tunisia, who also went through, by a single point, after a dramatic 2-2 draw with Morocco.

Just three minutes into the Group 5 decider in Tunis, the usually reliable full-back Hatem Trabelsi made a dreadful error to allow Morocco's Badr El-Kaddioui to square for an easy tap-in for Marouane Chamakh. Morocco, needing a win while Tunisia could afford just to draw, now had the sniff of qualification in their noses and the game had the makings of a battle royal.

Indeed, the battle became rather overheated – not surprisingly, given the importance of the game and the local rivalry. Talal El-Karkouri gave away a needless penalty that allowed Brazil-born Clayton to equalise in the 20th minute, and Morocco's Aziz Ben Askar helped kill off his team's chances by getting himself sent off with 15 minutes left for elbowing an opponent. In between, the histrionics continued unabated and there were two more quirky goals. Morocco went 2-1 up just before half-time in a goalmouth melee. El-Karkouri had the final touch even though all reports credited Chamakh with the goal.

But Tunisia made sure of their point when a cross-cum-shot from Adel Chedli caught goalkeeper Nadir Lamyaghri off his line. El-Karkouri tried to clear with a bicycle kick but only helped the ball further into the net.

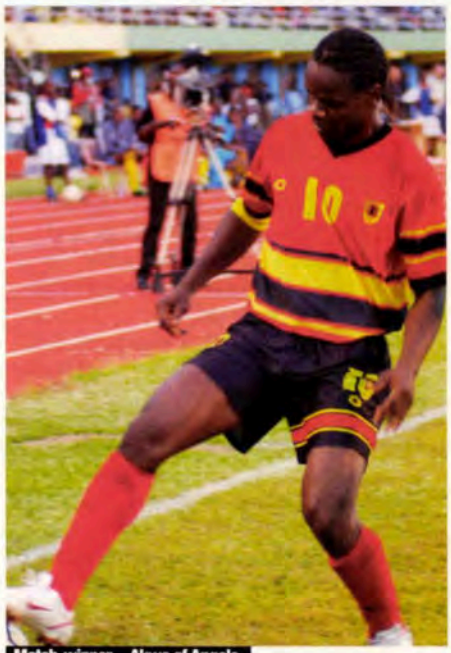
Afterwards, Morocco voiced some bitter complaints about the refereeing, but if truth be told their own eccentricity cost them a match that was certainly winnable. Coach Badou Zaki appeared to recognise the failings when he stepped down nine days later.

As for Tunisia, the reigning African champions, they now have a third successive World Cup finals to look forward to, while coach Roger Lemerre has the chance to oversee a more creditable performance on the world stage after the flop with France at Korea/Japan 2002.

At least he will go into the finals without the weight of expectation he carried with then defending champions France. The Tunisians have a workmanlike team but will likely be hard-pressed again to get past the first round.

For the first time, the World Cup qualifiers also doubled as the preliminaries for the African Nations Cup, with the top three from each group progressing to the finals next January. Because Egypt, who qualify as hosts, filled one of the top three places in Group 3, fourth-placed Libya will also play at the Nations Cup.

The 16 qualifiers are: Togo, Senegal, Zambia, Ghana, DR Congo, South Africa, Ivory Coast, Cameroon, Egypt, Libya, Angola, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Tunisia, Morocco and Guinea.


Match-winner...Akwa of Angola

WORLD CUP COUNTDOWN

25 STARS OF THE QUALIFYING CAMPAIGN

Profiles by Nick Bidwell, Michael Church, Mark Gleeson, Keir Radnedge & Tim Vickery

Reaching the heights...Adebayor's goalscoring prowess helped Togo book their place in Germany

1 Emmanuel ADEBAYOR
TOGO

TEN GOALS IN the qualifying campaign was the major contribution from Emmanuel Adebayor to tiny Togo as they surprisingly booked a place at the World Cup finals.

The 6ft 3in Monaco striker is the country's best-known footballing export and lived up to his star billing in a side devoid of any other real stars with goals at all stages of the qualifiers – from the two-leg preliminary round through a tough group phase, where Togo overcame both Senegal and Zambia to finish top of the standings.

"I'm a celebrity at home so I am forced to play well. I can't deceive the people of Togo," says the 21-year-old.

Adebayor arrived in France as a 15-year-old at Metz after being spotted at a summer tournament in Sweden and was playing first-team football three years later. In between, he was part of the Metz junior side that won the Coupe Gambadella, France's premier youth title. He was thrown in at the deep end when finally making the first team at the Alsace club as they lost their fight against relegation at the end of the 2001-02 season.

The next season, in Ligue 2, Adebayor came into his own, scoring 13 League goals as Metz bounced straight back to the top flight. It earned him a transfer to Monaco, who signed him while he was in discussions with Southampton, and a bit part in the Champions League campaign during which his new club went all the way to the Final in Gelsenkirchen where they were beaten by FC Porto.

Last season, Adebayor won a regular place in the starting line-up and repaid coach Didier Deschamps' faith with 11 goals, giving the club the confidence to sell Dado Prso and later Shabani Nonda.

Adebayor won his first cap for Togo in a World Cup qualifier against Zambia in 2000, almost a year before his League debut, but he had scored only one goal for his country before the current World Cup qualifying campaign. He also made one appearance for Togo at the 2002 African Nations Cup finals in Mali. In Germany, he should play a much more prominent role.

2 Michael ESSIEN
GHANA

Unheralded when he first played for Ghana at the Nations Cup finals in 2002, Essien has finally transferred his sparkling league form for Lyon and Chelsea to international level. His partnership with Stephen Appiah in midfield was the driving force behind Ghana's qualification.

3 Stephen APPIAH
GHANA

Formerly a bit-part player at Parma and Juventus and now a regular first-teamer with Turkish champions Fenerbahce, Appiah was the leader of Ghana's revival in the qualifiers, taking over the captaincy from Sammy Kuffour and providing the playmaking inspiration for a talented team.

Power...Drogba spearheaded the Elephants' charge

4 Didier DROGBA
IVORY COAST

Nine goals for the Elephants was a major factor in their qualification for a first World Cup finals appearance as the powerful Chelsea striker brought his star quality to the side.

WORLD CUP COUNTDOWN

25 STARS OF THE QUALIFYING CAMPAIGN

Drogba foil...Aruna Dindane

5 Aruna DINDANE
IVORY COAST

Overshadowed up front for Ivory Coast by the charisma of Didier Drogba, but Dindane was just as important, not only because of his goals but also his endless running and teasing of opposing defences, which made Drogba's ability to get the finishing touch that much easier. Formerly with Anderlecht, where he was Belgium's Footballer of the Year in 2004, he is now at Lens in France.

6 Alexander FREI
SWITZERLAND

Forget the bad misses against the Republic of Ireland in Dublin. Take away the half-dozen goals scored by the Rennes striker during the rest of the campaign and the Swiss would not have got near the play-offs. True, Frei may not be particularly quick or strong but what he does have is a keen nose for the half-chance. He is also brutally honest, a rarity in a game where platitudes are common currency. Frei said recently: "I'm not at my best this season and it's driving me crazy. If I perform like I did against Lyon, Switzerland will be playing with 10 men."

Angolan hero...Figueiredo

7 AKWA
ANGOLA

A total of 32 goals in 67 internationals has been a formidable return, and Akwa crowned his long Angola career by scoring the winner away to Rwanda that booked his country's first World Cup appearance. Akwa, a teenage prodigy at Benfica, where he did not live up to his potential, has spent almost a decade playing for various teams in Qatar.

8 JORGE ANDRADE
PORTUGAL

Forming an iron-clad central defensive unit with Ricardo Carvalho, the Deportivo La Coruna centre-back was in majestic form in all 12 qualifiers. While Carvalho provided the muscle and the aerial presence, Andrade was very much the brains of the partnership. He showed he is an excellent reader of the game, while his challenges are almost invariably perfectly timed. With Depor no longer the force they were, Andrade seems sure to be on the move very soon. Right, Mr Mourinho?

Mexican record...Jared Borgetti

9 Javad NEKOUNAM
IRAN

While the trickery of Ali Karimi has earned many of the headlines, central midfielder Nekounam was the man upon whom Iran's surge towards a third World Cup finals was built. In a team that boasts a vast array of attacking talent, Nekounam's disciplined displays at the heart of the side allowed those around him – Karimi, Vahid Hashemian and Mehdi Mahdavikia – to perform well. Not surprisingly, the Pas star has attracted international attention, his club turning down an offer from Kaiserslautern for his services during the summer.

Vital goals...Alex Frei

10 Paulo FIGUEIREDO
ANGOLA

A journeyman at club level in Portugal with Second and Third Division outfits, Figueiredo has been a midfield talisman and set-piece specialist for Angola and got an important goal away in Nigeria. He was born in Angola, though left with his Portuguese settler parents after independence. Now, ironically, he is a national hero in the land of his birth after Angola's historic first World Cup qualification.

11 Haikel GMAMDIA
TUNISIA

A goalscoring sensation as CS Sfaxien won the Tunisian League in May, Gmamdia was quickly elevated to the national team, where his phenomenal pace makes him an exciting attacking option. His ability has also been recognised by a recent move to Strasbourg.

12 Jared BORGETTI
MEXICO

He may be yet to make his mark on English football with Bolton, but Borgetti continues to set new standards at international level. He was the top

Elegant and powerful...Zlatan Ibrahimovic

scorer in the World Cup qualifiers, hitting an incredible 16 goals in the CONCACAF section and taking his international tally to 37, a new Mexican record.

13 Miroslav KARHAN
SLOVAKIA

Slovakia making the play-offs at the expense of Russia was not the only surprise in Group 3. Just as unexpected was the metamorphosis of Karhan, the erstwhile raw-boned midfield enforcer, who suddenly discovered he could actually play in the opposition's half, pushing purposefully forward, passing the ball intelligently and scoring four goals into the bargain. Slovakia's skipper has been leading by example in recent friendlies, too, netting both his side's goals in a 2-0 victory over Germany

Goals from midfield...Miroslav Karhan

in Bratislava. Sweet moments for someone who plays in the Bundesliga for Wolfsburg.

14 Zlatan IBRAHIMOVIC
SWEDEN

The elegant yet powerful Swedish front-runner sparkled throughout the qualifiers, combining his almost nonchalant ability to put the ball in the net (eight goals) with his other brilliant qualities: mobility, the ability to play deft through balls and his sleight of foot, which defenders simply cannot anticipate. In his second season in Italy with Juventus, the one-time wild child even seems to be showing more discipline on the pitch these days, no longer looking for instant retribution when fouled. Someone must have told Inter centre-back Marco Materazzi, who almost decapitated Ibrahimovic with a horror tackle in a recent Serie A match.

15 Rafael VAN DER VAART
HOLLAND

Some players either possess or develop an aura that marks them out from their team-mates – however good the team – and propels them into the media circus. David Beckham is an obvious example. His marriage to Victoria Adams merged the worlds of football and popular culture – just as Rafael Van der Vaart and Sylvie Meis have managed from a Dutch context.

Holland's outstanding young footballer and his actress/model wife have also had to put up with the maliciously offensive downside of their joint and separate fame and fortune. That helped to explain his apparently strange summer move from Ajax to Hamburg, although observers in Italy and Spain were surprised – insulted even – that he chose to move north-east rather than to Europe's sunny, deep south.

In 2002 and 2004 Van der Vaart shared the glory of being a League champion with Ajax but the first doubts about his potential also surfaced. Holland coach Dick Advocaat formalised those doubts by dropping Van der Vaart after the opening 1-1 draw against Germany at Euro 2004 in Portugal.

Then, last season, the relationship between Van der Vaart and his once-adoring Ajax fans began to cool. He was accused of failing to respond positively to the wave of criticism over erratic performances and results which eventually ended in the mid-season departure of coach Ronald Koeman.

When Van der Vaart announced his intention to move on, it was assumed that he had been approached by suitors from Spain and Italy. But Van der Vaart's priority was to play and the prospect of a life for ever in rotation alongside a dozen other cosmopolitan superstars held little appeal.

Hence the £3.5million move and a five-year contract with Hamburg, a great old club gradually pulling themselves back together on and off the pitch. Significantly, Van der Vaart said: "I hope things will be a little calmer here for me and my wife."

The signing of Van der Vaart has been compared with Hamburg's 1977 acquisition of Kevin Keegan which produced a League title success and runners-up spot in the European Cup.

Initial appearances have been promising. Van der Vaart scored in both legs of the InterToto Cup semi-final against Sigma Olomouc. In the Bundesliga he scored six goals and provided three assists as Hamburg – only twice in the top three in the past 20 years – made a powerful start just behind pacemakers Bayern Munich and Werder Bremen.

Holland have also reaped the benefits of Van der Vaart's return to form. He came back into the starting line-up for the national team's final four World Cup qualifiers, scoring the opening goal in the 2-0 win away to the Czech Republic that sealed Holland's qualification for Germany.

Back for Holland...Van der Vaart

25 STARS OF THE QUALIFYING CAMPAIGN

End of a long road...Shevchenko and Ukraine have booked a place in the finals at last

16 Andrii SHEVCHENKO
UKRAINE

UKRAINE WERE THE first European country to qualify for the finals – and they did it the hard way, from arguably the toughest group, which also included European champions Greece, Turkey and Denmark.

Andrii Shevchenko was the undoubted star of his country's first successful qualifying campaign for any major finals tournament, but the Milan forward stressed the importance of the national team's success for Ukraine as a whole.

"I would like to dedicate our qualification to the people of Ukraine," he says. "Our players gave all their efforts to reach the finals. For the first time in our history we've directly qualified for the best football tournament in the world. We are a young nation and for us it is very important even to participate in such a great gathering. I can't believe that we are at the finals in Germany."

Shevchenko learned about his team's qualification in a phone call from his wife, as the Ukraine squad were preparing to fly home after a disappointing draw against Georgia in September that appeared to have put their qualification on hold. "My wife Kristen phoned me when we were waiting for our plane at Tbilisi airport," he said. "I was in a very bad mood after our draw. But Kristen told me that Denmark had equalised in their match against Turkey. That automatically gave us a passport to the World Cup finals in Germany. I'll remember that phone call for the rest of my life."

Shevchenko is reluctant to make predictions about next year's finals. For the moment, he is happy just to bask in the glory of qualification after a decade with the national team.

"I've been on the road to the World Cup for 10 years," he said. "It's been a long, hard road. Before this qualifying campaign I understood only too well it was the final chance for me and my team-mates to compete against the best countries in the world."

17 Denny LANDZAAT
HOLLAND

Unlike some of his other choices of personnel, Holland coach Marco Van Basten certainly was not gambling when he selected the AZ Alkmaar man on the right side of midfield. Landzaat is one of the main reasons why AZ have developed into such a force in Holland, and the 29-year-old Moluccan's drive, accurate distribution, sound support play and tactical feel have served him equally well in the *Oranje* ranks. Nothing fancy but highly effective. Now rumoured to be on the wanted list of Real Madrid, Roma and Fiorentina, Landzaat has come a long way since being cut by Ajax in the mid-1990s.

18 Soren LARSEN
DENMARK

The 23-year-old bustling Schalke striker broke into the Denmark line-up only in the latter stages of the qualifiers. But what an impact he made, scoring five goals in as many games as the Danes recovered from a sluggish start to narrowly lose out to Turkey in the race for second place in their group. With both Denmark and Schalke – whom he joined this summer from Djurgardens of Sweden – Larsen has built himself a reputation as the archetypal supersub. Logic says he will not be in that role for long.

Change for the better...Larsen was Denmark's supersub

19 Adrian MUTU
ROMANIA

Either side of a seven-month ban for cocaine use, the 26-year-old forward was the heart and soul of the Romanian line-up, his delicate creativity and cool finishing (seven goals) often making up for the

Goal hunter...Mutu has been more like his old self

inadequacies of team-mates. Romania finished two points off the play-off berth in Group 1, but without Mutu, prospects of a summer in Germany would have faded far earlier. This was the Mutu for whom Chelsea paid £15.8million two years ago, not the underperforming one the mega-rich Premiership club were glad to offload when caught by the drug testers.

20 Giovanny ESPINOZA
ECUADOR

The gangling centre-back, Ecuador's only ever-present during qualification, once looked like a possible weak link. But he proved his strength as the team took third place in the South American qualifying group. Much improved on the ground, Espinoza is also the side's tower of strength in the air. His importance to the team was acknowledged when he was given the captaincy in the final qualifier, a 0-0 draw with Chile.

Power play...Espinoza was Ecuador's tower of strength

21 Roberto ACUNA
PARAGUAY

The veteran midfielder's international career appeared to be over having not been selected for almost three years. But with form and fitness regained, Acuna won a recall in September as the qualification battle entered the final straight. The 33-year-old has now dropped back into the holding role for Paraguay, and his quality and experience shone through in the vital wins over Argentina and Venezuela that helped his country to fourth place in the South American table and a berth in Germany.

22 Nelson HAEDO VALDEZ
PARAGUAY

The goals dried up for Paraguay last year making it clear that new blood was needed. The most important transfusion came in the form of this young striker, who rejected offers from Germany, where he plays for Werder Bremen, to turn out for the land of his birth. He was more than happy with his choice after scoring the goal against Venezuela that ensured Paraguay's World Cup qualification.

23 Diego LUGANO
URUGUAY

Uruguay went through the second half of the campaign unbeaten, and a key factor in their

Battler...Lugano gave Uruguay solidity at the back

solidity was the introduction of this no-nonsense stopper. Getting past Australia in the play-off would complete a wonderful year for Lugano, who won the Libertadores Cup with Sao Paulo in July.

24 Alvaro RECOBA
URUGUAY

"Chino" is a hugely controversial figure in Uruguay, where many feel that he has never come close to fulfilling his undoubted potential with the national team. So loud were the boos that he briefly retired from international football, sitting out four rounds

Enigma...which Recoba will turn up for the play-off?

of qualifiers earlier this year. But he returned to score the only goal against Argentina in the final match to ensure Uruguay would make it through to the play-off. Yet even at the moment of triumph he was controversial, selfishly wasting a golden opportunity to make the game safe. He will surely enchant and exasperate during the two matches against Australia. Uruguay's fate could hang on which he does most.

25 Luis Gabriel REY
COLOMBIA

It is scant consolation after missing out narrowly on the finals for the second time running, but Colombia have at least unearthed a quality striker. Over the last five rounds Rey gave an exhibition of his all-round strengths; he is quicker than he looks, uses the flanks well, has a good left foot and is a surprising threat in the air – his three goals all came from headers. He is also young enough to feature in South Africa in 2010.

Promise...Rey offers hope to Colombia

Party in Paris...Sylvain Wiltord and Djibril Cisse celebrate France's qualification after victory over Cyprus at Stade de France

EUROPE

Zidane inspires France to finals

FRANCE, BOOSTED BY the return of Zinedine Zidane from international retirement, were among the list of big names who secured automatic qualification after the final rounds of European qualifiers.

The French were joined by fellow group winners Holland, Portugal, Italy, England, Serbia & Montenegro and Croatia. Poland and Sweden also made the cut as the two best runners-up. The other six second-placed sides now meet in three head-to-head play-offs for finals places: Norway v Czech Republic, Spain v Slovakia and Switzerland v Turkey. Group 2 winners Ukraine were already assured of a finals berth after the September qualifiers.

Russia, Denmark and current European champions Greece were the biggest names to drop out.

France coach Raymond Domenech was offered a new two-year contract after the 4-0 defeat of Cyprus at Stade de France ensured a successful conclusion to a qualifying campaign that at times had threatened to end in disaster. Zidane sparked the goal spree with a first-half volley; Sylvain Wiltord, Vikash Dhorasoo and substitute Ludovic Giuly completed the easy win.

Zidane had brought down the curtain on his international career last year, not long after France's disappointing Euro 2004. But he was persuaded to return – allegedly because he heard voices in the night – for France's game against the Republic of Ireland in September, along with Claude Makelele and Lilian Thuram. The 1-0 win over the Irish, courtesy of a Thierry Henry goal, turned out to be the only non-draw between any of Group 4's top four teams (France, Switzerland, Israel and Ireland).

France went into the Cyprus game in third place needing a victory to give them a chance of taking first place but knowing that the Swiss, whom they had drawn 1-1 against four days before, would qualify as group winners if they beat Ireland in Dublin. However, Switzerland only drew, 0-0, meaning France's win put them top.

The French met the Swiss in Berne without the injured Henry and David Trezeguet. Substitute Djibril Cisse had opened the scoring early in the second half, but Ludovic Magnin struck back for the hosts with 10 minutes remaining.

Switzerland's draw in Dublin meant they had to make do with the play-offs, while the Republic of Ireland's failure to qualify marked the end of the road for manager Brian Kerr, who was informed by the FA that his contract would not be renewed.

In Group 5, Italy reached the finals with a 1-0 win over Slovenia in Palermo, their penultimate game. Norway clinched the play-off spot on the same day after a 1-0 win at home to Moldova.

Portugal were stunned when going behind to Liechtenstein in the first half of their penultimate match but recovered their composure to win 2-1 and clinch their place in Germany as winners of Group 3. Slovakia qualified for the play-offs – their first for a major finals – by edging out Russia thanks to a 0-0 draw in Bratislava. Four days earlier, Russia had hit five past Luxembourg but needed to beat the Slovaks to snatch second place.

Holland pulled off the most significant result of the penultimate round of qualifiers when they beat the Czech Republic 2-0 in Prague to seal top spot in Group 1. The Czechs fended off the challenge of Romania for the play-off place by beating Finland 3-0 away four days later. The Dutch victory in Prague also confirmed that both England and Poland would qualify – one of them was bound to win Group 6, while whichever of them did not was guaranteed to take one of the two best runners-up spots.

England had gone into their game against Austria without the

'Russia, Denmark and current European champions Greece were the biggest names to drop out'

suspended Wayne Rooney and under enormous pressure following defeat to Northern Ireland in their previous game. An underwhelming 1-0 win over the Austrians was notable for captain David Beckham becoming the first England player to be sent off twice while playing for his country after he collected yellow cards for two fouls in quick succession on Andreas Ibertsberger.

Four days later against Poland, England were without the suspended Beckham but had Rooney restored to the line-up – and put on a far more convincing performance to win 2-1 and claim first place in Group 6.

In Group 7, Serbia & Montenegro qualified for their first World Cup after winning a tense match against

Watch it!...Czech Ujfalusi is booked for fouling Holland's Van Nistelrooy

Bosnia-Herzegovina in Belgrade. The game, settled by Mateja Kezman's seventh-minute goal, was the first between the teams in the city.

Serbia's win consigned Spain to the play-offs. Atletico Madrid striker Fernando Torres scored five goals for the Spanish in their victories over Belgium and San Marino, but it was not enough to win top spot.

Denmark missed out on the play-offs despite winning their final Group 2 games against Greece, who also fell by the wayside, and Kazakhstan. Turkey's win in Albania confirmed their second-place finish behind Ukraine.

Gavin Hamilton

ASIA

Delay gives Bahrain edge

Play-off success...Bahrain celebrate

BAHRAIN BEAT UZBEKISTAN on away goals in the Asian play-off after benefiting from the extra month of preparation afforded them by FIFA's decision to restage the first leg because of a refereeing error. The Bahrainis had lost the original tie 1-0 in Tashkent on September 3, but gained a 1-1 draw in the rematch on October 8. They then held the Uzbeks to a 0-0 draw in the return in Manama four days later to go through to the Asia-CONCACAF play-off.

Bahrain coach Luka Peruzovic acknowledged that his side had been helped by the delay, saying: "Before we played the first game against Uzbekistan in Tashkent we hadn't played any competitive games; we had been in our training camp and were playing only friendly matches. Our Qatar-based players had played only three League games, and although the Qatari League is one of the best in the Gulf area, that was not enough."

It was a different story five weeks later as the Bahrainis rediscovered their competitive edge. Talal Yusuf scored the vital away goal after just 17 minutes, and though Maxim Shatskikh headed an equaliser two minutes later, the damage had been done. Peruzovic's side toughed out the return to set up a tie with Trinidad & Tobago, the fourth-placed CONCACAF side, for a place in the finals.

"I knew before the match that it would be tough because Uzbekistan have good players and, secondly, for them it was important to score a goal," said Peruzovic after the second leg. "I told the team the match would be difficult, and it was. We made it a little bit more difficult for ourselves because from the beginning we had chances to score and we didn't take them, so in the last 15 minutes we were in a difficult position. But the players worked hard and in the end everybody was happy.

"I think we deserved it over the two matches because we played more realistic football and it was very important to score in Tashkent. It was very, very important. I knew a goal would make the difference."

The away goals loss ended the Uzbeks' mini-renaissance since the arrival of Bobby Houghton as coach in early August. The Englishman had guided his new team to victory over Kuwait in the final game of the group stage to book a place in the play-offs. "We played well in the second half [of the second leg] and always looked capable of scoring, but Bahrain defended very well," said Houghton, who has previously coached China and Malmo of Sweden. "Overall, Bahrain played better than us. They attacked but did not leave any open space for us to capitalise and score. Full credit to Bahrain and congratulations to them for going into the final play-off."

FIFA ordered the restaging of the first leg after a blunder by Japanese referee Toshimitsu Yoshida, even though it had disadvantaged the Uzbeks, the match winners. Just before half-time he disallowed a goal from a penalty by Uzbekistan midfielder Server Djeparov because of encroachment by a team-mate, but instead of ordering the kick to be retaken, Yoshida erroneously awarded an indirect free-kick to Bahrain.

Michael Church

World Cup 2006

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CONCACAF

Trinidad & Tobago sneak into play-off

STERN JOHN MISSED a first-half penalty but then scored twice as Trinidad & Tobago pulled off a shock 2-1 win over Mexico in their final qualifier to earn a play-off against Bahrain. The Soca Warriors sneaked fourth spot in the six-team final stage ahead of Guatemala, whose 3-1 win over Costa Rica was in vain.

The Costa Ricans had taken CONCACAF'S third automatic finals berth four days earlier, when they won 3-0 at home to the United States, who, having already qualified, fielded a weakened team. Paulo Wanchope became the Ticos all-time leading scorer, hitting his 43rd goal in the first half to set his side on their way to their second successive finals. Substitute Carlos Hernandez added two more in the second half.

On our way...Alvaro Saborio gets in a shot during Costa Rica's 3-0 win over the USA

'I'm at the end of my career and this could be a fantastic finale'

Trinidad & Tobago coach Leo Beenhakker dreams of Germany

Trinidad & Tobago began their last game two points ahead of Guatemala but the Central Americans had the better head-to-head record, meaning that Trinidad could not rely on a draw to see them through. And after just over half an hour, it looked like curtains for the Soca Warriors.

Guatemala raced to a 3-0 lead against disinterested Costa Rica, with goals from Elmer Ponciano, Freddy Garcia and Carlos Ruiz. Meanwhile, in Port-of-Spain, John missed his spot-kick and Mexico took advantage with a delightful chip from Jaime Lozano.

But John – who was in the crowd in 1989 on the day Trinidad, needing only to draw at home to the USA to qualify for the 1990 World Cup, lost 1-0 – had other ideas. He equalised five minutes before half-time, following up after Dwight Yorke's shot hit a post, then struck the winner on the hour from long range.

Trinidad & Tobago coach Leo Beenhakker, who led his native Holland to the 1990 finals, was delighted. "Time doesn't forgive and I'm more or less at the end of my career. This could be a fantastic finale for me," said the 63-year-old.

The turning point for both the Soca Warriors and Costa Rica came after they drew 0-0 in March, a result that led to both coaches being sacked. Bertille St Clair made way for Beenhakker, who won four of his seven qualifiers in charge, while Costa Rica brought back Brazil-born Alexandre Guimaraes, their 2002 finals coach, to replace Colombia's Jorge Luis Pinto.

Guatemala started the final stage strongly but then fell away. They were left to rue their 5-2 defeat in Mexico four days earlier, when Francisco Fonseca scored four goals. Honduran coach Ramon "The Primitive" Maradiaga resigned two days after their elimination.

Brian Homewood

SOUTH AMERICA

Same old story

SOUTH AMERICA'S qualifying group ended with the same outcome as four years ago, Brazil, Argentina, Ecuador and Paraguay taking the four direct places in the finals and Uruguay earning a play-off against Australia.

Argentina and Brazil had qualified before the last two rounds and were soon joined by Ecuador and Paraguay.

Ecuador's 0-0 draw at home to Uruguay in Quito in the penultimate round was enough to send them to their second successive finals, while Paraguay won 1-0 in Venezuela with a goal by Nelson Haedo Valdez to qualify for the third time in a row.

Paraguayan federation president Oscar Harrison promised that coach Anibal Ruiz, who guided the team through the two-year long campaign, would keep his job and not be sacked in favour of a high-profile European. That happened in 2001, when Sergio Markarian was ditched in favour of Italian Cesare Maldini.

The results in the penultimate round left Uruguay, Colombia and Chile fighting for the play-off spot with matches against already-qualified Argentina, Paraguay and Ecuador respectively. Uruguay had one point more than the other two.

Uruguay's match with Argentina rekindled memories of 2001, when a remarkably uncompetitive 1-1 draw with the same opponents allowed them to sneak fifth spot on goal difference from Colombia, whose 4-0 win in Paraguay also raised eyebrows.

Chile coach Nelson Acosta clearly tweaked a nerve when he said: "Let's hope everything goes normally and everyone wins or draws on merit." As it turned out, the two sides produced a typically full-blooded River Plate derby, with Uruguay winning thanks to Alvaro Recoba's goal at the start of the second half. Colombia's 1-0 win in Paraguay, courtesy of Luis Gabriel Rey's header, was rendered irrelevant and Chile bowed out with a 0-0 draw at home to Ecuador.

Getting shirty...Uruguay and Ecuador players square up during their 0-0 draw in Quito

Brazil pipped Argentina for top spot on goal difference by beating Venezuela 3-0 in their last game, with Ronaldo hitting the target in an international for the first time in over a year.

Brian Homewood

'We'd be unstoppable'

The Juventus and France midfielder picks his World XI

FOR MY GOALKEEPER, I would choose **Fabien Barthez** because he is the best keeper I have played with and is still one of the best in the world.

At left-back, I would pick **Paolo Maldini**, with **Cafu** at right-back. They're both still playing at the highest level professionally, and they've both been great examples to me of how professional players should look after themselves. They still have loads of energy, and they love to bomb forward, even after so many years at the top.

In the centre of defence I would probably go for **Franco Baresi** because to me he represents sheer elegance. He was brilliant for Milan in that sweeper or libero role, he saw danger before anybody else and wiped it out. Alongside Baresi I would play **Basile Boli**. I had to have a Frenchman in the back four, and he's got the sort of strength and determination that we will need.

As for the midfielders, I would play **Frank Rijkaard** in defensive midfield. I love his elegance and his simplicity. In front of him would be **Zinedine Zidane** because he's simply one of the greatest players ever in the history of the game. Zizou does things with the ball that make your jaw drop in amazement.

On the right of midfield I would put **Luis Figo**. I love Figo, he's got so much class. I like the way he takes on his man and beats him. We'll need players like that. On the left, let me think, that's not easy. It will have to be **me**!

What I am sure about, though, is that I would make **Pele** my main striker because he's the greatest goalscorer of all time. No contest, he's the best.

Alongside Pele, I would have **Johan Cruyff** as he's cool and elegant and he knows how to make other players shine.

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1 FRED

Looking to be Lyon king

FRED'S PHENOMENAL STRIKERATE for Cruzeiro – 56 goals in 71 games – made it almost certain he would be on his way out of Brazil in the summer, but where to? Sevilla wanted to spend some of the fee they received from Real Madrid for Julio Baptista on the 22-year-old, but their £7million offer was below Cruzeiro's valuation. Then Lyon stepped in just before the transfer deadline at the end of August, and the £12m fee made Fred their second most expensive buy, after fellow Brazilian Sonny Anderson, who cost £15m from Barcelona in 1999.

Whether the youngster, full name Frederico Chaves Guedes, is the right player for the French champions is another matter, given that he and Norwegian John Carew, another new signing, have a tendency to play through the same channels. That is a problem coach Gerard Houllier must resolve, but the first difficulty – getting Fred signed at all – was at least successfully negotiated.

"It was a complicated deal," said Lyon president Jean-Michel Aulas, referring to the fact that the club had to sort through the minefield of financially interested parties – Cruzeiro, Feyenoord, who invested in a 10 per cent share of the player two years ago, and Fred and his brother/agent Rodrigo, who together owned 15 per cent.

Once those complexities had been resolved, however, the rest of the deal was smooth enough, with Fred flying in to Lyon with a Cruzeiro director one day and passing his medical and agreeing terms the next.

He made an instant impact on the pitch, scoring both goals on his debut in a 2-1 win over Monaco. "Just what I expected," said compatriot team-mate Cris, who also played with Fred at Cruzeiro.

Fred first gained national attention in Brazil in January 2003 when scoring the fastest goal in the country's history – after 3.17 seconds – during a youth tournament. He was immediately promoted to the first-team squad at his club side, Second Division America Mineiro, and scored on his debut as a substitute.

In July 2004, after 34 goals in 57 matches, Fred was sold to Cruzeiro. He made a slow start but began to find the net consistently. His prolific form earned him a Brazil call-up for the 3-0 friendly win over Guatemala last April, staged as a testimonial/farewell for his hero, Romario.

That was when a flock of European clubs, including Milan, Marseille and Monaco, began to take notice. In fact it was Nancy who were the first to bid but their £4m offer was rejected. Then in came Sevilla and Lyon.

Levir Culpi, Fred's first coach at Cruzeiro, says: "He's strong, has a powerful shot in both feet and is good in the air. He's intelligent, works hard and scores spectacular goals. He has what it takes to be an international sensation."

Fred talked with Cris before agreeing to join Lyon. He says: "I trust Cris from our time together at Cruzeiro and he told me Brazilian players are very popular in France. After that, it really didn't take me long to make up my mind."

Fred hopes Lyon will provide him with the platform to break into Brazil's World Cup squad. First, though, he has to secure a starting role with his club – and the way they played in beating Real Madrid 3-0 in the first Champions League group game, that may be easier said than done.

Keir Radnedge

FACT FILE

Club	Lyon (Fra)
Born	October 3, 1983, in Teofilo Otoni
Previous clubs	America Mineiro, Cruzeiro
International debut	April 2005, v Guatemala
International caps	1 (0 goals)

2 RICARDO OLIVEIRA

Banging them in for Betis

RICARDO OLIVEIRA COULD be forgiven for being thoroughly sick of travelling. Time after time he is called upon to join his national squad, asked to fly from Europe to South America, just to sit on a bench in his tracksuit.

Although he has racked up eight caps, most of his appearances have been for a few minutes as a substitute. But Oliveira has appeared in other non-A internationals. He scored on his debut against a Catalonia XI in May 2004 and hit another goal against Sevilla in a match to mark the club's centenary celebrations.

Much as he tried to deny it, the latter was a particularly satisfying goal since Oliveira plays his club football for Betis, Sevilla's city rivals. He spent the night getting roundly booed, not to mention booted up in the air – a reaction that spoke volumes about the rivalry between the clubs and the fear that Oliveira struck into Sevilla hearts.

That fear is not misplaced. It is almost ludicrous to think that Oliveira is not a regular for Brazil. After all, this is the man who scored 22 League goals last season, finishing third in the national scoring chart just behind Diego Forlan and Samuel Eto'o; the man so important to his side that he was never rotated, playing more minutes than anyone else, including goalkeeper Antonio Doblas.

Being Brazilian means the men in front of him in the national team pecking order include Adriano, Robinho, Ronaldinho, Julio Baptista and Ronaldo. But Ronaldo finished behind Oliveira in the goalscoring stakes last season as the Betis forward ended his club's striker curse – not since the 1996-97 season, when Alfonso Perez hit 25 goals, had they had a decent finisher.

Oliveira performed against expectations. He had failed to convince Valencia coach Rafa Benitez after joining from Santos in summer 2003, despite scoring eight times in 21 games as the club won La Liga. Betis picked him up for just £2.75million, yet Oliveira knew once he had settled, his second year in Spain would be better.

He was right. An early-season goal against Deportivo La Coruna got him up and running for his prolific showing in 2004-05, and he went into the current campaign full of confidence, saying he was gunning for the League top scorer prize.

Quick, mobile, lithe and direct, Oliveira prides himself on offering more than just goals, dropping to the wing to collect and create, but it is without doubt the goals that marked him out. Important goals, too. He scored in six of Betis' final nine League games last season as they successfully pushed for a first Champions League place. He also opened the scoring in the Cup Final against Osasuna, putting his team on the way to a 2-1 victory and a first major trophy for nearly 30 years.

In the summer, Oliveira announced that he wanted to leave Betis because president Manuel Ruiz de Lopera had failed to fulfil a promise relating to bonuses. It was a measure of his stature at the club that Lopera, who normally refuses to suffer any insubordination whatsoever, backed down immediately and sorted it out.

Another season like last may even make it impossible for Brazil coach Carlos Alberto Parreira to leave Oliveira on the bench when the World Cup comes round. If not, at least the forward knows that compared to his recent trips, travelling from Seville to Germany is nothing.

Sid Lowe

FACT FILE

Club Betis (Spa)
Born May 6, 1980, in Sao Paulo
Previous clubs Portuguesa, Santos, Valencia (Spa)
International debut July 2004, v Chile
International caps 8 (3 goals)
Honours Copa America 2004; Confederations Cup 2005; Spanish League 2004 (Valencia); Spanish Cup 2005 (Betis)

3 LINCOLN

Gunning for a Germany cap

BAYER LEVERKUSEN forward Paulo Rink was the first Brazil-born player to appear for the German national side, winning 13 caps between 1998 and 2000. But the recent attempts by Schalke's Lincoln Cassio de Souza to follow in Rink's footsteps have been rebuffed.

The playmaker has enjoyed much success with Schalke, helping them to a second-place finish in last season's Bundesliga and direct entry to the Champions League group stage. Yet he has continued to be overlooked by Brazil coach Carlos Alberto Parreira. "I've been in the best form of my career, what more can I do? Nothing," Lincoln said. "I have to accept that I am not wanted by Brazil. Maybe [Germany coach] Jurgen Klinsmann would be interested. I would love to play for Germany because this is a country with which I identify now and where I intend to stay."

However, Lincoln's offer was politely rejected. "We're delighted that such an exceptional player as Lincoln is interested in playing for Germany," said national team manager Oliver Bierhoff. "He could certainly do a job for us. But we really think that players should have a closer relationship with Germany than is the case with Lincoln."

The playmaker first arrived in Germany in 2001, signed by Kaiserslautern from Atletico Mineiro. But after making a creditable start, he suffered a string of injuries and the club were happy to let him go when Schalke showed an interest in summer 2004. Twelve goals in 31 games was the return on such faith, as Schalke finished runners-up to Bayern Munich last term. The downside was Lincoln's disciplinary record – two red cards and five yellows – and he started this season by collecting a four-game ban for spitting at Stuttgart's Thomas Hitzlsperger during Schalke's 1-0 League Cup Final win.

To his credit, Lincoln worked harder than ever in training during his suspension, even paying to bring a goalkeeper over from Brazil so he could work on his shooting skills. Such signs of commitment back his claim that he is "1000 per cent happy with Schalke". And, who knows, if Germany suffer more World Cup warm-up setbacks such as the recent defeats by Slovakia and Turkey, pressure may grow on Klinsmann and Bierhoff to think again about giving Lincoln a call.

Keir Radnedge

FACT FILE

Club Schalke (Ger)
Born January 22, 1979, in Sao Bras do Suacui
Previous clubs Atletico Mineiro, Kaiserslautern (Ger)

4 DANIEL CARVALHO

Magic in Moscow

CSKA MOSCOW midfield maestro Daniel Carvalho is definitely not two-footed, his right leg serving only for the purposes of symmetry. But why should he care when he can conjure such attacking magic exclusively with his left? The stockily built 22-year-old was simply unstoppable in the second half of CSKA's 3-1 victory over Sporting Lisbon in last season's UEFA Cup Final, setting up all his side's goals.

In a 45-minute masterclass, Carvalho's speed off the mark, dribbling skills and ability to produce wonderfully disguised through balls had the Sporting rearguard in panic. It was a foregone conclusion that he should be elected man of the match.

"I wasn't surprised how Daniel turned the game for CSKA," said Sporting's Brazilian defensive midfielder Fabio Rochemback (now at Middlesbrough), who used to line up alongside Carvalho at Internacional of Porto Alegre. "He's not known as a great goalscorer but he's brilliant running with the ball and can unlock any defence with his clever passes."

Carvalho, born and raised in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, joined Internacional, the local heavyweights, in his early teens and starred during the conquest of three regional titles with the youth side. He made his first-team debut in 2001, aged 18, and won the state championship with the club two years later.

Carvalho also played with distinction for the Brazilian Under-20 side that won the 2003 World Youth Cup, and it was only a matter of time before he was on his way to Europe. CSKA got in first, signing Carvalho for £2.5million in February 2004.

The Brazilian looked at home in Moscow from the very start, scoring the winner on his debut, a Russian Supercup clash with city rivals Spartak.

"When I signed for CSKA many thought I'd made a mistake to go to the cold of eastern Europe," Carvalho says. "Now I've won an important European trophy and am playing well. I'm having a lot of influence on games and am much more consistent than I used to be."

Nick Bidwell

FACT FILE

Club CSKA Moscow (Rus)
Born March 1, 1983, in Pelotas
Previous clubs Internacional
Honours World Youth Cup 2003; UEFA Cup 2005; Russian Cup 2005; Rio Grande do Sul championship 2003

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5 ALEX de Souza

Searching for consistency

THE MOMENT OF truth is fast approaching in the international career of maverick creative midfielder Alex de Souza. Despite having won almost 50 caps and two Copa Americas, the 28-year-old has never truly convinced at the highest level. If he is to feature at next year's World Cup, he will have to present a far more persuasive case over the next few months to Brazil boss Carlos Alberto Parreira.

No one could deny that the little playmaker has a wonderful array of gifts: perceptive left-footed passing, dexterity on the ball, wonderful balance, effectiveness in front of goal and free-kick wizardry. Nor can he be accused of under-achieving at club level – he was instrumental as Palmeiras captured the Libertadores Cup in 1999, Cruzeiro took the 2003 Brazilian national championship and current club Fenerbahce walked away with the Turkish League crown last season.

But despite scoring 24 goals in 2004-05, his first season at Fener after a £3million move from Cruzeiro, and having a hand in 15 others, not everyone was satisfied. The club's group stage elimination from the Champions League had critics bemoaning Alex's lack of pace and physical robustness, while coach Christoph Daum questioned his attitude and application. "It's not enough for Alex only to show up against lesser-known opposition," roared the German after a defeat by Besiktas last year. "He's an exceptional player, a genuine match-winner. But he has to show more consistency."

It is not the first time Alex has been the object of such criticism from a coach, and it is justified to a large extent. Ever the diva, Alex can be world class in one match, invisible the next, and has a habit of shifting the responsibility for an under-par display on to others; recently he angered Daum and club president Aziz Yildirim by complaining about the team's tactics on his website.

It is deeds not words that Alex requires to move ahead of Kaka, Julio Baptista and Juninho Pernambucano in Brazil's attacking midfield pecking order.

Nick Bidwell

FACT FILE

Club Fenerbahce (Tur)
Born September 14, 1977, in Coritiba
Previous clubs Coritiba, Palmeiras, Flamengo, Parma (Ita), Cruzeiro
International debut September 1998, v Yugoslavia
International caps 49 (12 goals)
Honours Copa America 1999, 2004; Libertadores Cup 1999 (Palmeiras); Brazilian championship 2003 (Cruzeiro); Brazilian Cup 1998 (Palmeiras); Turkish League 2005

6 JULIO CESAR

Toldo's usurper at Inter

ONE OF THE surprises of the new Serie A season has been the decision of Internazionale coach Roberto Mancini to drop first-choice goalkeeper Francesco Toldo and replace him with Brazilian Julio Cesar.

But the switch has been totally vindicated so far, with the 26-year-old producing excellent performances.

The expected explosion from Toldo finally came in October when he told Sky Italia TV that if he had known he was to be second-choice keeper for the season, he would have taken up one of the offers made by other clubs during the summer. But while it is understandable that Toldo, one of Italy's success stories at Euro 2000, should feel miffed, it is also hard to deny the quality of the man keeping him out of the side.

Julio Cesar was bought by Inter from Flamengo last January but then loaned to Chievo for six months, during which, curiously, he did not play in a single official game. After returning to Inter this summer, he made an excellent impression during the club's pre-season tour of England. Toldo unwisely opted out of that trip and has been unable to get his place back since.

In his TV outburst, Toldo implied that Julio Cesar's fine showings had been helped by the much improved Inter defence, greatly reinforced this summer by the signing of Argentinian Walter Samuel. There is certainly some truth in this assertion, but it detracts from the genuine quality of the Brazilian. He is mobile, quick to come off his line, good in the air, good with the ball at his feet and very self-assured.

Julio Cesar's form did not escape the attention of Brazil coach Carlos Alberto Parreira, who recalled him for October's World Cup qualifier against Bolivia. The keeper's sound display has almost certainly earned him the No 2 spot to Dida of Milan in Germany.

The times they certainly are a-changing when the first and second-choice Brazilian goalkeepers at a World Cup finals both play their club football in Milan.

Paddy Agnew

FACT FILE

Club Internazionale (Ita)
Born September 3, 1979, in Rio de Janeiro
Previous clubs Flamengo, Chievo (Ita)
International debut July 2004, v Chile
International caps 11
Honours Copa America 2004; Rio state championship 2000, 2001, 2004

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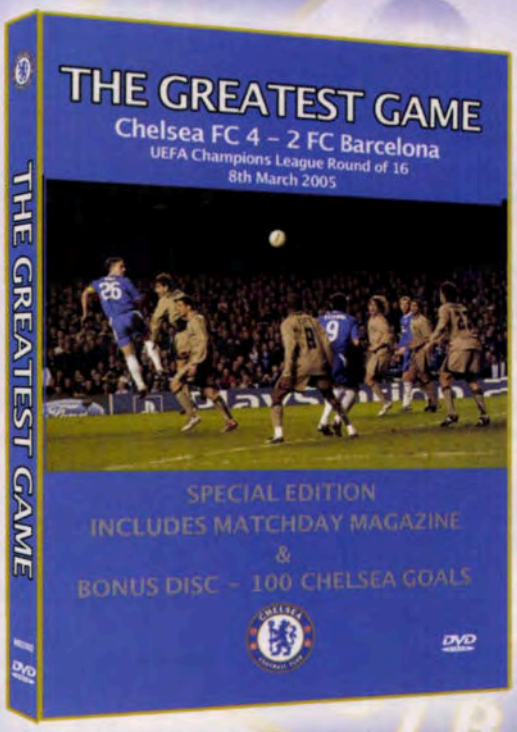

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Brian Glanville on former Northern Ireland player and manager Peter Doherty

Pure talent

Doubled up...Doherty, with Derby, takes on two Brentford defenders

NORTHERN IRELAND INTERNATIONAL Peter Doherty was playing Total Football long before anyone had thought of it. The wiry, red-haired inside-left covered great areas of ground, had fine technique, a flair for the telling pass, and a great ability to score goals.

Doherty was born in Coleraine, one of 10 children, and his family was too poor ever to afford to buy him a pair of football boots. Yet he played games where he could and eventually graduated to a little local team called Station United. Not long after he had left school, Coleraine, the local professional club, approached him, called him up for a trial and put him in the side when Norman Lynn, a first-teamer, missed his train. Alas, Doherty touched the ball only twice, wasn't even offered a lemon in the dressing-room at half-time, and when Lynn turned up, was abruptly replaced. Never, he swore to himself, would he play for Coleraine again.

'Doherty and his lieutenant, Danny Blanchflower, were bubbling with ideas'

Instead, he joined Glentoran of Belfast, from where he was bought by Blackpool, then in the English top division, in 1933.

Two years later he was sold again – he might just as well have been a bale of merchandise, he acidly recalled – to Manchester City for £10,000. He joined the likes of goalkeeper Frank Swift and left-winger Eric Brook, and City won the championship in 1936-37. The following season, they were relegated!

During the war, Doherty worked at the RAF rehabilitation centre in Loughborough, together with Sunderland's Raich Carter, another famous inside-forward. The pair frequently played for nearby Derby County as wartime guests, and they joined the club just after the war to form a scintillating partnership. This helped bring Derby the FA Cup in 1946, with Doherty scoring the second goal of the 4-1 defeat of Charlton.

But Doherty fell out with Derby after club officials surreptitiously tried to stop him acquiring a licence to run a local hotel. He demanded a transfer, and off he went to Huddersfield Town, whom he helped to keep in the First Division. Then, eventually, to Doncaster Rovers, as player-manager. His ideas were original, sometimes eccentric. In those days, players' shirts were numbered strictly according to the position they played. Hoping to confuse the opposition, Doherty put the "wrong" numbers on his players' backs.

Later, he would manage Bristol City, but it was his triumphant years as manager of Northern Ireland that provided a splendid sequel to his fine playing career. Doherty had been capped many times by Northern Ireland, but as manager steered the side to spectacular success. He could not have had a finer lieutenant than right-half and captain Danny Blanchflower, like him devoted to pure football and bubbling with ideas. Together, they inspired the team to reach the 1958 World Cup after astonishingly topping a qualifying group that contained mighty Italy.

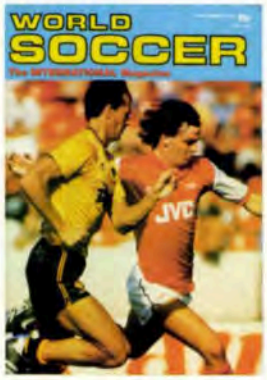
The team acquitted themselves honourably at the Sweden finals, despite being without centre-half Jackie Blanchflower, Danny's brother, badly injured in Manchester United's Munich air crash a few months earlier. The Irish got through their group after beating Czechoslovakia in a play-off in Malmo, but were then easily beaten 4-0 by France in the quarter-finals having been further depleted by injuries and having had to endure a ludicrous coach trip to Norrkoping.

But Doherty, who also oversaw Northern Ireland's notable victory against England at Wembley the previous year, had undoubtedly made his point.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

NOVEMBER 1983

KEIR RADNEDGE REPORTED ON THE VICIOUS FOUL ON DIEGO MARADONA BY ANDONI GOICOECHEA, THE "BUTCHER OF BILBAO"



SO, ON SATURDAY, September 24, Barcelona and Bilbao – Maradona and Goicoechea – came face to face at Camp Nou.

Barca were in charge. Bilbao rarely threatened. The match was rolling to an obvious conclusion when, in the 59th minute, Maradona wriggled away from his marker and turned towards goal. As he accelerated, so Goicoechea came striding across from behind Maradona, and to his left, and scythed through the general area occupied by the Argentinian.

It was a late tackle. A vicious tackle. A tackle designed to foul, to halt a player in his tracks. Goicoechea insisted later – and still insists – that he does not go out with the deliberate aim of hurting any player.

But when you're built like the side of a house it stands to reason that an ill-timed tackle made at full speed will do an awful lot of damage, in this case, torn left ankle ligaments that will keep Maradona out until early next year.

Maradona fell, screaming: "It's broken, it's broken." It wasn't. But, given the severity of the injury, that can hardly be any consolation.

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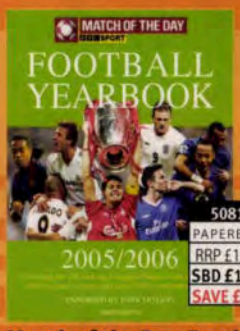

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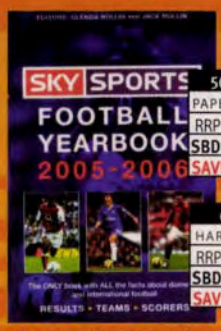

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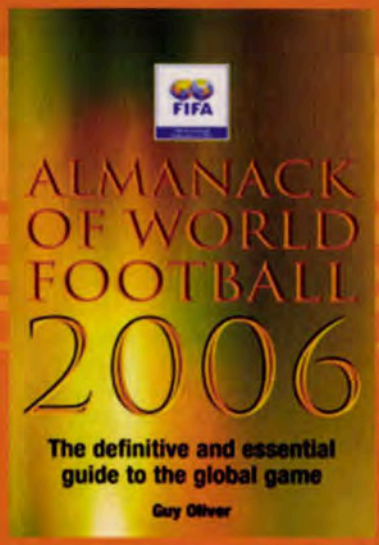

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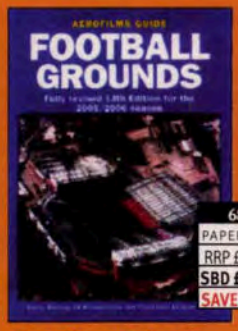

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WS WORLD SOCCER GLOBAL VIEW Paul Gardner

Help, we keep hearing voices

Players with earpiece links to coaches, yakking commentators... TV-football is a whole different ball game

FOOTBALL IS FRAGMENTING. No doubt about it. Of course, this always happens when anything gets too big. If it's religion you get heretical sects, if it's politics you get splinter parties, and if it's rock music you get ever more discordant groups, and if it's football... well, what do we get?

I've worked it out. What we get is a breakaway form of the sport. I'll call it TV-football. A different sport, really. But one that is threatening to submerge the more traditional form of the game.

I really can't be bothered with the statistics, but I feel quite certain that no one will rise up to contradict me when I contend that, these days, millions and millions more fans watch games on TV than actually go to stadiums.

Different experience, different game. When you go to the stadium, do you want some loud-mouthed know-it-all sitting next to you, telling you about every single thing that's happening in front of your own eyes? Non-stop describing, explaining and analysing... five minutes of that and you'd want to land one on him, right?

But that's what you get with TV-football, it's an integral part of the experience. Yes, I know, you can use the mute button – but then you lose the excitement of the crowd noise. No, TV-football fans are a new and growing breed who are being force-fed an entirely novel version of the game.

I have been complaining for a while now about the disastrous influence of coaches in the game. In fact, plenty of people feel the coach is ruining modern football because he's too involved, wants to control everything, to reduce the players to robots who merely do what he tells them.

You'll have noticed the coach's grip tightening recently when Real Madrid's Vanderlei Luxemburgo stuck an earpiece in the ear of his captain, Raul, taped it into position, and then relayed radio messages to him from the touchline during a friendly game. Luxemburgo has done this before, when coaching Corinthians in Brazil – "a technological advance...for the benefit of football," he announced. Ricardinho was the lucky player to get an earful on that occasion. He seemed unaware of the technological triumph, remarking only: "The earpiece didn't hurt, didn't fall out and didn't get in the way."

Yes, there have been protests against the use of radio earpieces during the game. But they have not been particularly vehement. This does not surprise me, because TV-football is in the process of giving us a generation of football people – particularly spectators – who are growing up believing that football always comes with a soundtrack, that there's always a voice yakking away, right there inside one's ear.

The culprit here, of course, is the TV commentator. There must be thousands all over the world, in every language, shrieking and yelling into their mikes.

Nowadays, the standard formative experience for youngsters getting to know the game is that it comes with an inseparable audio component. As Luxemburgo has proved, the experience can now be extended right through your playing days. No word from FIFA on this yet – even though it seems to fly in the face of Sepp Blatter's loudly-proclaimed allergy to anything technological. All we've had is a curt statement that there's nothing in the rules against the use of earpieces – provided they're safe and not likely to injure anyone.

'A generation is growing up believing that football always comes with a soundtrack'

If Luxemburgo's brainwave catches on, I imagine that the instructions relayed by the coaches will soon have to be in code to avoid interception.

No point in encoding the soundtrack for TV viewers, of course. That has to be as understandable as possible. And it needs must be a very clever soundtrack because most of these commentators were tremendous players only a few years ago so they know everything there is to know. They can come up with stuff the average idiot fan would never dream of – only this week, I heard one of these experts asserting the attacking team had just won a corner "in a good position". That's what TV-football can bring you. I think they would call that an "insight".

On the same wavelength...Raul and Luxemburgo

It's worrying, though, because I just have the feeling that some of these insights might not be so clever after all. I also have a sneaking suspicion that a lot of them actually come from the coaches, that the TV-football experts might be purloining some of their know-how.

Yikes! We're heading towards a sport where the coaches have some sort of central thought-control operating. Once I hit on that discovery, I started listening more carefully and there is evidence of standardised thinking.

I am now in a position to guarantee that, on every second broadcast, you will hear the commentator spell out, in stupefying detail, one of these two tactical insights:

1) When a team is in desperate need of a goal they have to attack with abandon and so must be on guard against counter-attacks.

2) When a game is stuck at 0-0 then both teams need to use the wings more, to play the ball wide in order to open up the opposing defence.

I now know 99 per cent of football tactics can be classified under one of those two headings. At least, that's what TV-football, the sport with the soundtrack, has taught me so far.

Galacticos pay – for now

Real Madrid have overtaken Manchester United as the world's highest-earning club. But their spending power in the transfer market is small compared to Chelsea's. Simon Banks reports

Movers and shakers...but Real Madrid's superstar policy may have had its day

REAL MADRID PRESIDENT Florentino Perez recently claimed that his galactico strategy has been vindicated by the fact that the club had revenues of £190million in their last financial year. That sum makes Madrid the world's highest-earning club, replacing Manchester United, whose revenues of £169m for the year ending July 31, 2004, was the previous highest figure.

Since becoming Madrid president in 2000, Perez has overseen a transfer programme involving the spending of £342m on star players and a further £547m on wages. That spending spree was made possible by the sale of the club's training ground for £475m in 2001. The windfall provided the cash to clear the club's sizeable debts and purchase established stars such as Luis Figo, Zinedine Zidane, Ronaldo and David Beckham.

Key to Perez's strategy has been the use of the galactico players in promoting the Real Madrid brand around the world. When they signed for the club, all Madrid's star names gave up some or all of their image rights to the club, in return for higher wages. That meant the players' images could be used in advertising and promotional material for the club's corporate partners such as Siemens, Adidas and Pepsi.

Now the galacticos are starting to generate the income that recoups the heavy investment in them. In the year ending June 30, 2005, Real Madrid had sponsorship and merchandising revenues of £78m, or 41 per cent of the club's total income. Matchday income generated £48m (25 per cent), while TV rights earned the club £45m (24 per cent) and pre-season tours brought in another £15m (8 per cent). As a comparison, Manchester United's commercial revenues for their last reported financial year amounted to £45m.

'Perez needs to build a team that wins, not one that just earns money'

Real Madrid's annual wage bill amounted to £95m, or 50 per cent of total income, a manageable figure. So that part of the galactico strategy does appear to be working.

However, the other part of the strategy, the part that involves winning trophies, has yet to yield the expected results. After winning the Champions League in 2002 and the Spanish League in 2003, Madrid have suffered two trophy-less seasons.

Those sceptical of the galactico strategy could, perhaps justifiably, blame it for the lack of success, because the star players have been bought more with an eye for their ability to enhance the Real Madrid brand than their suitability for the team. That said, getting through five coaches in as many years could hardly have helped the team's performances.

Although Madrid are top of the world revenue league, there are three reasons why it is unlikely they will pursue the galactico strategy with such vigour in the next few years.

Firstly, there are no more training grounds to sell and provide another huge windfall. Despite Madrid's massive increase in turnover in their last financial year – the £190m figure was 17 per cent higher than in the previous year – the club reported a surplus of only £4m after costs were deducted. So Madrid will either have to take on more debt or rein in future spending.

Secondly, Perez was re-elected last year and faces another election in three years' time. Club members will surely be disinclined to vote for Perez again if his second term delivers no trophies, just a healthy balance sheet. Perez needs to build a team that wins, not a team that just earns money.

The third reason is the Roman Abramovich effect. Up until now, Madrid have been able to acquire superstar talent by outbidding every other club. Now they face another bidder, Chelsea, with much deeper pockets.

Real Madrid may have become the world's highest-earning club, but they are not the richest. That accolade belongs to Chelsea – their backer has a personal fortune estimated at £7billion, a figure that makes Madrid's £4m profit look like peanuts.

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Tragedy...Foe is carried off after collapsing during the Confederations Cup semi-final against Colombia in Lyon

Legal challenge over Foe

Family of Cameroon star launch court action against FIFA and clubs

REMEMBER MARC-VIVIEN FOE? He was the Cameroon captain who collapsed and died during a match at the Confederations Cup in France in June 2003.

His death cast a pall over the tournament and prompted the creation of various projects to raise funds both for his family and for a youth development foundation in his name.

Neatly tucked away? History? Filed?

Not at all. His widow, Marie-Louise, has lodged a legal claim with the social security commission in Lyon – where the match was played – demanding Foe's death be recognised as an "accident in the workplace".

Responsibility for Foe's rights as an employee has been claimed against the regional insurance bureau, the social security board, the Lyon club (to whom he was on loan), Manchester City (to whom he was contracted) and FIFA as organiser of the match.

Foe, who had a weakness of the heart known as cardiac hypertrophy, collapsed during the semi-final against Colombia and was declared dead 45 minutes later in the medical centre at the Stade Gerland.

The case has major implications for football and employment law, and one of those concerns where legal responsibility lies for players sent on loan to a club in another country. Money is not, at the moment, the issue. That will come later, no doubt.

Prosper Abega, the Foe family's lawyer, says: "We are seeking, in the first instance, a ruling that Mr Foe was under contract to Lyon and thus came under the jurisdiction of the French social security system in case of an accident at work. After that we will consider the next steps."

Lyon reject the claim, which might presumably have consequences for Manchester City and the UK social security system. Marino Faccioli, Lyon's administrative director-general, says: "Marc-Vivien Foe was playing football for us but only under a temporary agreement and would not thus have qualified for social security registration here."

It will be interesting to see how FIFA responds to a legal case that directly involves an incident on the field of play. The world authority has, of course, demanded that the Belgian federation punish Charleroi for going to court over the long-term injury to Moroccan midfielder Abdelmajid Oulmers while on international duty.

Now who should FIFA target? Foe, after all, is long dead.

Barca get away with a Messi situation

BARCELONA have got their way – Lionel Messi is now playing freely in La Liga after the competitions commission approved his (delayed) registration as an official Spanish-assimilated player.

Barcelona had been forced to go down the citizenship path after filling their non-EU slots with Mark Van Bommel, Samuel Eto'o and Ronaldinho.

Suddenly, the protests of Deportivo La Coruna, Alaves, Zaragoza and several other clubs have melted away. Watch the next two transfer windows for a gesture of thanks.

Cynical? Not at all. It's an open secret that Barcelona loaned Javier Saviola to Sevilla, and not neighbours Espanyol, to silence Sevilla opposition to the downgrading to a paltry fine of the threatened closure of Camp Nou after crowd trouble.

One good turn deserves another where an Argentinian player is concerned.

Rights and wrongs for refs

Painful...Michael Essien writhes in apparent agony after his foul on Tal Ben Haim but Chelsea's Ghanaian midfielder escaped with only a yellow card

WHY CAN A YELLOW card not become a red card? Because FIFA says so. Why can a red card become a yellow card? Because the FA says so.

Yes, card-sharp chaos is back on the agenda. On the same day Blackburn's Zurab Khizanishvili had a red card (against Liverpool) downgraded on appeal, Chelsea's Michael Essien escaped a three-match ban because a referee is permitted only to err on the side of mercy.

Khizanishvili was sent off for tripping Liverpool's Djibril Cisse as the French forward dashed for the penalty box. It was a mildly contentious decision but, from TV replay evidence, perfectly justifiable on behalf of referee Rob Halsey.

The red card – and the referee – were then undermined by the FA's decision to allow the appeal. Khizanishvili, who would have missed only one game anyway, was thus available for Blackburn's next match.

The same panel, however, rejected an appeal by Bolton's Ricardo Gardner against his sending-off for handball against Chelsea, to the frustration of Bolton boss Sam Allardyce, upset by the inconsistency of it all (which foul, for example, was the more dangerous?).

That same Chelsea-Bolton match was won 5-1 by the champions but Allardyce was also justified in complaining that Essien should have been sent off for a straight-leg jab at Tal Ben Haim when Bolton were 1-0 up. Instead, referee Rob Styles penalised the Ghanaian, who had feigned injury in his fall, with a mere yellow card.

Styles agreed to review the decision with a view to upgrading yellow to red and with a consequent three-match ban in mind. But the FA was then told by FIFA that stepping up the punishment was impossible because "the referee's decision in such instances is final".

Unless your name is Halsey and the card is changing colour the other way.

No wonder managers are so frustrated – and in these cases it was not so much the referees to blame as their colour-blind governing bodies.

FIFA did not assist the perception of refereeing infallibility, either, in ordering a replay of the Uzbekistan-Bahrain World Cup play-off because Japanese referee Toshimitsu Yoshida blundered over the law governing a penalty retake.

Either the referee has full authority or he does not. And if he does he deserves full support from officialdom. FIFA was wrong over Uzbekistan and right over Essien; the FA was wrong over Khizanishvili and right over Gardner.

Right or wrong, the referee's decision must be final.

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Transfer deal...there is uncertainty regarding the money for Cisse

French corruption cases stack up

THE UBIQUITOUS Jean-Louis Dupont is in demand these days. On one hand, he was summoned by G-14 to advise on legal action against FIFA over the issue of national team compensation to clubs; on the other, he has been entrusted by Liverpool (a G-14 member) to take a watching brief over the latest French transfer scandal as it affects Djibril Cisse.

At the last count, this is the fourth financial scandal to crash around the ears of the French football establishment.

The first concerns the Marseille money-diversion case, which comes to trial next spring with the accused headed by Robert Louis-Dreyfus, Marseille owner and boss of Adidas; the second concerns the award by the French federation of lucrative contracts to marketing "godfather" Jean-Claude Darmon; the third concerns the alleged disappearance of monies amid Paris Saint-Germain's transfer dealings; and the fourth concerns the actions of various agents in dealings involving eight clubs, including Cisse's former employer, Auxerre.

Basically, the documents collected in fraud squad raids for one operation have opened up paper trails leading to the next.

There is no suggestion that Liverpool, who paid £14million for Cisse but appear to have no certainty about where all that money ended up, have done anything wrong. Indeed, they can be integral in the progress towards a clear-the-air solution.

Many structural and administrative problems in French football centre on the game's split personality. Football is still considered a recreational activity under French law rather than a business enterprise to be governed by commercial law.

This is why, for example, Lyon have been forbidden to launch on the stock market, something president Jean-Michel Aulas is desperate for to raise funds for a custom-built stadium.

The longer these complex investigations drag on, the more cases of possible fraud they uncover. A general amnesty has been suggested, but that would merely paint a picture of endemic corruption: not a happy prospect for the land of Jules Rimet in the run-up to "his" World Cup.

Language lessons or football? You decide!

Ten out of 10 for trying to the Goethe Institut in London. The German cultural centre in Kensington has launched a language course for "fans with no knowledge of German but with a passion for football".

This is aimed at England fans travelling to the World Cup who will want to know what local fans are shouting when Jurgen Klinsmann's boys are scoring goals or missing them (swear words, presumably, would be a private tuition optional extra).

Zero out of 10 for timing to the Goethe Institut. The course aimed at all those "with a passion for football" is being run on...Saturday afternoons.

Abel Xavier caught in the crossfire

ABEL XAVIER is innocent, OK. This is an essential statement of dope-test fact as I write since the Middlesbrough full-back's A sample after the UEFA Cup tie against Xanthi had proved positive but the B sample had yet to be analysed. If all does not go well for him, an intriguing test case concerning responsibility and authority looms.

Abel Xavier was playing for an English club in Greece in a UEFA competition administered under the general auspices of FIFA. Where would punishment begin or end? Which body would be responsible? And how would any punishment sit in the context of football's reluctance to sign up to WADA's anti-doping code?

FIFA has dodged and dived since the "signing" ceremony in 2004. President Sepp Blatter did not sign up to WADA, he signed only an undertaking to sign up. When I asked him later about completion, he said: "Whenever WADA wants to send its lawyers to Zurich to sort out the small print we will be happy to sign."

Happiness has yet to break out; WADA will not crawl to FIFA, and FIFA maintains its right to treat each case on its merits. Ultimately, the Court for Arbitration in Sport will have the final say, but do not hold your breath waiting for a date.

Abel Xavier may end up trapped not only by a dope test but also in a political crossfire.

Dope test...Abel Xavier

OBITUARY

Johnny Haynes, 1934-2005

Class act...Haynes

THE LAST TIME I saw Johnny Haynes play in an international was for a British XI in Stanley Matthews' farewell match in 1965. He appeared totally at ease in a game that also featured Alfredo Di Stefano, Jim Baxter, Ferenc Puskas, Josef Masopust and Ladislao Kubala.

That was the level of class on which Haynes, who has died aged 71 after suffering a brain haemorrhage while driving, operated and for which 18 goals in 56 games for England would today appear scant reward.

He scored 157 goals in 657 games for Fulham, his only senior club and where he formed an inside-forward partnership with Bobby Robson that they replicated with enormous success for England in 1960-61.

Haynes' last England appearance was in the 1962 World Cup quarter-final defeat by Brazil in Chile. After returning from a cruciate ligament injury in 1963 he found Alf Ramsey did not want him and he also turned down a high-profile club finale with Tottenham, who wanted him to fill the creative gap left by the death of John White. Later, Haynes moved to South Africa, where he won a title medal with Durban City before returning to the UK to Edinburgh.

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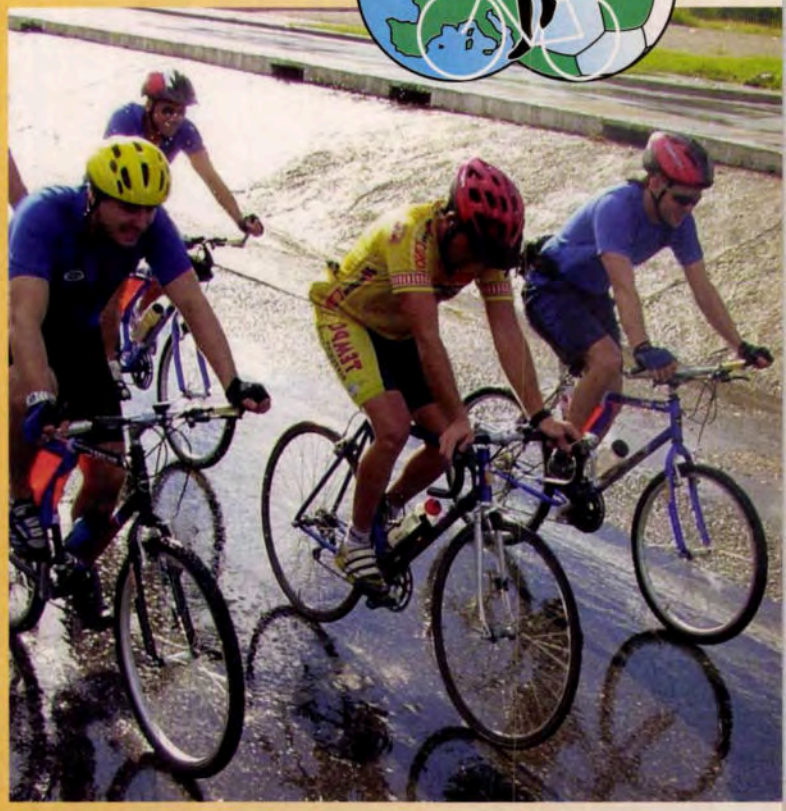

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Mexico win it with flair

WORLD UNDER-17 CHAMPIONSHIP

Tim Vickery reports from Peru on a breakthrough triumph

THE 2005 WORLD Under-17 Championship was played exclusively on artificial pitches and featured a ball with a magic chip which, in theory at least, informed the referee if it had crossed the goal-line.

But the biggest innovation in Peru was the way in which Mexico won the title. Jesus Ramirez's team showed the sound organisation and tactical sophistication that have become hallmarks of Mexican sides, but also touches of individual flair, which have not always been so abundant.

Giovani Dos Santos was responsible for much of the latter, not least in the Final, when Mexico emphatically beat defending champions Brazil 3-0. Just after the half-hour the little left-footer surprised the opposition defence with a bursting run and cross. Carlos Vela, typically, got in front of his marker to glance a header into the far corner and in the process became tournament top scorer.

Mexico doubled their lead within two minutes. Efrain Valdez chipped a clever pass behind Brazil's defence, and the ball sat up for Omar Esparza to crash home a glorious volley.

Brazil's Celso had previously hit the bar with a free-kick, but his side never came closer to scoring. Star player Anderson limped off early – coach Nelson Rodrigues complained of rough tackling after the game – and without him the South Americans never looked like breaking down the Mexicans.

Brazil were tall, strong and full of frightening ability. But they were over-dependent on flashes of individual genius. They had nothing to match the Dos Santos-Vela partnership, and in central midfield they seemed unable to dictate the rhythm of the game, as Mexico could with the impressive range of passing of Valdez and Jorge Hernandez.

Mexico's win was sealed when supersub Ever Guzman scored for the fourth consecutive game. Put through by a quickly taken free-kick, he was held up by the keeper but kept his head to slide the ball in. Brazil lost their heads, and, for the second time in the tournament, a wild lunge by left-back Marcelo brought him a straight red card.

So the tournament ended just as it had begun, with Mexico seeing off South American opposition in Lima's National stadium. They had beaten

You beauty...Mexico skipper Patricio Araujo plants a kiss on the World Under-17 Championship trophy after receiving it from FIFA president Sepp Blatter (left)

Heads up...Turkey and Brazil's epic semi-final

Uruguay 2-0 in the opening match. In between, the action went up to the northern coastal towns of Trujillo, Chiclayo and Piura, and into the jungle at Iquitos. A total of 111 goals were scored, at an average of nearly 3.47 per match. Plenty of future stars filled scouts' notebooks and valuable experience was picked up – mostly in front of sizeable crowds. Many Peruvians were clearly enchanted to see their country stage such a tournament, and were anxious to be part of it.

And this was despite the early exit of the home side. Peru huffed and puffed in Group A but could manage only one goal in their three games – and that was from a penalty, against a tough but somewhat uninspired Ghana, who were also eliminated after three straight draws.

The group was won by Costa Rica, cautious but canny, with the gifted Celso Borges pulling the strings in midfield. Second place, and the other quarter-final spot, went to China, who enjoyed some good moments but tried everyone's patience with excessive time-wasting.

In Group B, Mexico and a hugely impressive Turkey made short work of Australia and Uruguay, and there was more joy for the CONCACAF region in Group C, which was topped by the United States.

Italy's 4-3 win over Ivory Coast got Group C off to a wonderful start. The Africans could be a joy to watch, especially when playmaker Serge Kouadio was on song. But their defending was shambolic. It made for a fascinating clash, with Italy setting out to do no more than was necessary.

However, their respective styles proved costly. Ivory Coast underestimated North Korea in their next match, left their defence even more open and were taken apart 3-0 by rapier-like breaks.

Italy also paid the price, thankfully, for their joyless approach. Had more use been made of the tiny, talented Andrea Russotto they may have done better. Instead, he was only brought off the bench when the team's skinhead army had got themselves in trouble, and against the United States it proved too late. The Koreans held off Italy in the final group round to make it through with the US, who qualified comfortably without doing anything remarkable.

Group D was all action. Holland, with left-winger Johannes Goossens sparkling, scored five against Qatar, but had their slow defence sliced apart and conceded three. Brazil took the lead against Gambia, Igor scoring with a marvellous overhead kick, but were soon in trouble. Gambia were making their debut in the competition, but their strength, tight marking and spearhead Momodou Ceesay brought them a 3-1 win.

A group of Gambian supporters, travelling from the west African country, missed the game because of problems with their plane, but they made sure they would not miss the following match, against Qatar in Piura. Their plane entered Peruvian airspace without permission, although it was then given clearance to go to Lima. However, the Gambians faked an emergency in order to allow them to land in Piura, 1,000km to the north. The tiny airport had its fire engines at the ready and the local hospitals were on stand-by as the Tri-Star came to a halt and 300 Gambians dressed for a football match calmly got out. The scam paid off as they saw their side win 3-1, while Brazil redeemed themselves with a pulsating 2-1 victory over the Dutch.

Brazil were lucky that goal difference, rather than head-to-head record, determined group position. They filled their boots against Qatar, winning 6-0, while Gambia crashed out after losing 2-0 to Holland. This time Ceesay was the villain, missing a late penalty that would, if converted, have put Gambia through on goal difference. Why he took it when Ousman Jallow had scored from the spot in both previous games remains a mystery.

African and Asian exit

So, just as in the previous tournament, in 2003, there were no African sides in the last eight. Soon the Asians had also gone. Turkey ripped China to pieces with a marvellous display by their attacking diamond – Nuri Sahin as playmaker, Tevfik Kose as spearhead, Deniz Yilmaz and Caner Erkin on the flanks. North Korea did better, giving Brazil a huge fright before succumbing in extra-time.

CONCACAF also lost two of its representatives. One had to go in the duel between Mexico and Costa Rica, and it was very nearly the Mexicans. Costa Rica took the lead with a freak own goal, then soaked up the pressure until two minutes from time, when Valdez equalised via a cruel deflection. A crashing finish from Guzman and a header from Vela took Mexico through in extra-time. The United States had their limitations exposed by Holland, to set up the possibility of an all-European Final.

It never happened, though Turkey pushed Brazil all the way in the game of the tournament. Brazil were irresistible in the first half. Anderson set up a goal for Celso straight from the kick-off, scored a superb solo second himself, and Marcelo added a third with an audacious shot from the touchline.

Turkey had captain Erkan Ferin sent off before half-time, and it seemed all over. But the Turks came roaring back after the break, won the support of the crowd and rode their fortune to draw level. Extra-time loomed, until Anderson produced another unstoppable burst and squared for Igor to tap in. There was still time for the Turks to have two more players sent off, one in the tunnel after the game.

Holland fell much more easily. They had defensive problems even when able to call on their first-choice back four, and by the semi-final injuries and suspensions had severely depleted their resources. So it was no surprise that Mexico were able to pick them off on the break, winning 4-0.

So the Mexicans strolled into the Final while Brazil scraped and scrambled. But come the big day, so the media consensus went, tradition would surely count for something and the champions would retain their crown. How wrong we all were.

10 STARS FROM PERU

Carlos VELA
Mexico. Born: 01.03.89. Club: Guadalajara
Tournament top scorer. Consistently too quick for his marker and finished well, both in the air and with his left foot.

RAMON
Brazil. 24.05.88. Atletico Mineiro
Tall, strong attacking midfielder. Needs to improve his discipline but has huge promise.

Jeffrey SARPONG
Holland. 03.08.88. Ajax
Tiny midfielder with a lovely touch and technique. Has the engine to burst beyond the strikers and the vision to play them in on goal.

Lovely touch...Sarpong

CANER Erkin
Turkey. 04.10.88. Manisaspor
Dynamic attacking midfielder, strong on the ball and with an excellent left foot. Also good in the air.

NURI Sahin
Turkey. 05.09.88. Borussia Dortmund (Ger)
Elegant playmaker who offers a good supply line to the strikers. Dangerous from set-pieces.

Celso BORGES
Costa Rica. 27.05.88. Saprissa
Playmaker who caught the eye with defence-splitting passes and raking shots.

CHOE Myong-ho
North Korea. 03.07.88. Kyonggongop
"The Korean Ronaldo" soon proved to be something very different – a midfielder who can pass, shoot and cross with power and subtlety.

Oluri SARKODIE
United States. 18.06.88. Chicago Magic
A contender for defender of the tournament. Cool, neat and classy in everything he did.

Jonathan QUARTEY
Ghana. 02.06.88. Heart of Lions
Strongly-built centre-back. No stylist, but showed plenty of no-nonsense defending.

Momodou CEESAY
Gambia. 24.12.88. Wallidan
Giant striker who terrified defenders with swift turns and strong surges. Needs to work on his left foot, but is certainly one to watch.

Klinsmann in the dock

GERMANY

Back problem...Per Mertesacker's loss of form is just one of Klinsmann's headaches in defence

THE GERMAN MEDIA had a field day pouring scorn on national coach Jurgen Klinsmann and his not-so-merry men following the *Nationalmannschaft's* shambolic 2-1 friendly defeat by Turkey in Istanbul. And there were all kinds of attack, from the knuckleduster approach of *Bild* ("Klinsmann, why are we so bad?") to the sarcastic barbs of *Welt am Sonntag* ("Welcome to Germany, where you have nothing to fear from your World Cup hosts").

Germany's third-place finish at this summer's Confederations Cup and a half-decent record last season – 10 wins in 16 games – encouraged many a journalist and fan to subscribe to the theory that Klinsmann was the saviour, restoring pride to the team after the disappointments of Euro 2004. But Klinsmann's face is suddenly adorning the "most wanted" posters after his shapeless, pedestrian side suffered that defeat by Turkey, another in Slovakia (2-0), got an undeserved 2-2 draw in Holland and laboured to a 1-0 home win over China.

With the World Cup a mere nine months away, the most alarming item on the charge sheet is the instability and disorganisation that reigns in defence. Klinsmann's insistence on alternating goalkeepers Oliver Kahn and Jens Lehmann has bred only uncertainty, while constant changes in the rest of the back-line personnel have inevitably proved a handicap to building an effective unit.

Central defence is a real headache. Hannover's Per Mertesacker has lost form, recently-introduced young Lukas Sinkiewicz of Koln has not looked the answer, and the international future of Germany's most experienced stopper, Christian Worns of Dortmund, is in doubt after he was dropped.

Klinsmann is also coming under heavy media fire for being a "conference-call boss" – he still lives in California and spends only a few days per month in Germany. If the results were positive, no one would care if his address was in LA or the Outer Hebrides. But with his side far from all-conquering, he has left himself exposed.

The anti-Klinsmann camp is not exclusively inhabited by the press and ex-players (the latter are only too happy to trot out the "better in my day" line). Bundesliga clubs have also ganged up on the coach, complaining about his American fitness gurus, physical tests squeezed into an already tight schedule and the ignoring of their pleas to go easy on players with knocks or in need of a rest.

Werder Bremen coach Thomas Schaaf said: "We keep hearing that the national team staff want players to be 20 or 30 per cent fitter, but I don't see how we can get any more out of them.

"I don't recall any team of mine meeting another in the Champions League which was in better physical shape. We've had a full programme early in the season, and ordering our internationals to Hamburg for tests was not a sensible course. We are in danger of reaching a point where the national team sees only its own interests. If we go on like this there could be confrontation."

Bayern general manager Uli Hoeness was as hard-hitting as usual, saying: "The national team is in a catastrophic situation. With the World Cup around the corner, we should have the basic contours in place, but we can't see them. The road we are following is not the right one. Klinsmann should be here, not strutting around in California."

Different wavelengths

But the coach was in no mood to be conciliatory in the face of the growing rebellion. "While I speak to the coaches and managers in the Bundesliga on a regular basis and am always ready to listen, it would be asking too much for us to always be on the same wavelength," said Klinsmann. "Ultimately, me and my staff make the decisions. The claims of the national team take preference over those of the Bundesliga. If we want to compete with the best in the world, we have to be better prepared. We are demanding a lot from our internationals, much more than we would ask of average players."

World Cup organising committee chief Franz Beckenbauer and federation joint presidents Theo Zwanziger and Gerhard Mayer-Vorfelder have called for clubs to show solidarity with the national team. Clear-the-air talks are planned, but whether they succeed is another matter.

Ottmar Hitzfeld, meanwhile, will return to the game next season, apparently refreshed by travelling the world and playing golf. The 55-year-old, out of circulation since he and Bayern Munich went their separate ways in June 2004, will not be short of offers since his CV lists two Champions League triumphs and five Bundesliga titles.

The current Bayern side had to give in to superior firepower after 15 consecutive Bundesliga wins, losing 2-0 at high-flying Hamburg. The latter's new Dutch recruit, playmaker Rafael Van der Vaart, has been setting up and scoring goals with the appetite of the famished. Not since Kevin Keegan 30 years ago have Hamburg fallen in such a big way for the charms of an overseas star.

Bayer Leverkusen have brought in former Dortmund and German federation coach Michael Skibbe to replace the sacked Klaus Augenthaler. Skibbe was not the first choice – Leverkusen chief executive Wolfgang Holzhauser hoped Rudi Voller, the club's director of sport, would take the reins on a permanent basis. Skibbe, of course, was Voller's No 2 during the latter's time as national coach.

Nick Bidwell

So that's the new boss...the Monaco players gather round as Francesco Guidolin (centre) begins work at the under-pressure club

Francesco who?

FRANCE

YOU COULDN'T ACCUSE Monaco president Michel Pastor of making a populist choice when appointing Francesco Guidolin as the successor to Didier Deschamps. The 50-year-old Italian, charged with putting the club back on track after a decidedly shaky start to the season, would barely turn a head in the Principality, nor anywhere else in France for that matter.

But Guidolin, who has previously coached Palermo and Genoa, was given the nod after Pastor and his vice-president Gerard Brianti saw 12 potential appointees, and his reputation as a disciplinarian may well have been the key.

The obvious choice, of course, would have been Paul Le Guen, still without a club since quitting champions Lyon back in May. But although Pastor says conversations did take place with him, he "doesn't want to manage any team just now".

However, Pastor and Brianti were quick to deny Guidolin is coach by default. "We really liked the way he talked and his ideas on how to push the team forward," said Brianti. "We liked his work ethic, his desire to achieve our goals, his discipline, reputation as a tactician and the confidence he brings to his teams."

Reading between the lines, that means the Monaco chiefs feel the team's attitude needs toughening up. Certainly, Deschamps fell out with his bosses – Brianti in particular – over the side's obvious lack of backbone. The former national team captain pleaded a lack of funds for team strengthening as the reason behind Monaco's poor showing to date this season, but this cut little ice with the vice-president, who believed Deschamps had lost the support of key members of the dressing-room. Whatever the truth, there's no doubt Monaco had all too often shown a soft underbelly out on the pitch, and so something had to be done.

The stern-looking Guidolin was nicknamed "The Sad Owl" in Italy, and is what they term *"un homme serieux"* in France. The best translation is that he's not frivolous, and this much was evident when he got straight down to business, taking his first training session on the very day he was presented to the media.

Mind you, there's no time to lose, with Pastor insisting on a top-three finish in Ligue 1 for a side who were languishing in 11th place, 10 points behind leaders Lyon, on the day Guidolin took the reins. The Italian has been given only an 18-month contract, which is perhaps the clearest indication that Pastor won't kick his heels waiting for results.

"That's enough time for me to build something," insisted Guidolin. "But we're going to have to sweat for it." Indeed he will. The pressure is already on, with the French football media and public sceptical of a man who has never coached outside his native country.

Palermo success

There's no arguing that Guidolin did a fine job at Palermo between February 2004 and June this year, guiding them to promotion and then to a sixth-place finish in last season's Serie A and entry to the UEFA Cup. During this run, five of his team were also called into the national squad. But his lack of big-club experience weighs heavy on French minds.

There's also a question mark over Guidolin's motivation for taking the job. His brief time at Genoa, newly promoted to Serie A, was an unmitigated disaster. He took the helm in July, but before a ball had been kicked Genoa were demoted to the Third Division when they were found guilty of fixing their promotion-clinching match against Venezia.

"I had two very difficult months at Genoa," Guidolin admitted at his first press conference at Monaco. "I thought I was joining an ambitious Serie A club, but it was absolute hell." And who in his right mind wouldn't grab at the very first available lifeline out of the underworld?

Of course, results will dictate how people take to Guidolin. It's hard to judge whether caretaker boss Jean Petit's performance in steering the club to two wins and a draw in Ligue 1 will help or hinder. On one hand, it drags Monaco nearer that top-three finish the president demands. On the other, it puts the pressure on Guidolin to post positive results from the word go. France is watching with interest.

Howard Johnson

Van Basten scores highly

HOLLAND

Standing tall...Van Basten has enjoyed an unprecedented unbeaten run since taking charge 13 months ago

MARCO VAN BASTEN has performed the notable feat of guiding the national team to the World Cup finals unbeaten in what is his first job as a head coach. Not only that, but the team, remoulded by the former Holland forward since taking over from Dick Advocaat after Euro 2004, are popular again with the fans, who had grown disaffected by a perceived lack of effort on the players' part.

Holland sealed their place in Germany with a 2-0 win away to the Czech Republic, which extended Van Basten's unbeaten run to 15 games since he took over, a Dutch record. That became 16 with a 0-0 draw at home to Macedonia in the final qualifier four days after the Prague encounter.

Van Basten, whose previous coaching role was as assistant in Ajax's youth set-up, made a clean sweep when taking over in September last year, declaring he wouldn't tolerate players who showed a movie-star attitude. Clarence Seedorf and Patrick Kluivert were his first victims, while other big names such as Edgar Davids, Roy Makaay and Mark Van Bommel have also often been omitted. Instead, Van Basten has given Dutch League players a chance. To date he has fielded no fewer than 38 players, 18 of them debutants, of whom Khalid Boulahrouz, Jan Kromkamp, Barry Opdam, Hedwiges Maduro and Dirk Kuijt are now regular starters.

But it is not all sweetness and light. Van Basten promised Holland would play attractive football – they rarely do – while his assurance that they would dominate games has been undermined by the fact they have sometimes been lucky to win at all. Then there is his troubled relationship with Van Bommel. The Barcelona midfielder is no longer part of Van Basten's plans because the coach feels he has neglected his defensive duties. But many pundits claim Van Basten has acted childishly by calling Van Bommel up to squads only to drop him again as he points out his weaknesses.

Klaas-Jan Droppert

SWITZERLAND

Play-offs after drawing a blank

The national team had to settle for a place in the play-offs, where they will meet Turkey, after managing only a 0-0 draw away to the Republic of Ireland in their final World Cup group qualifier. A win would have given Switzerland an automatic ticket to the finals, but they couldn't find the goal they needed. Alex Frei had the best chance, but with only the keeper to beat, he fluffed it. Ironically, keeper Pascal Zuberbuhler gave a solid performance at the other end, having cost the team valuable points because of blunders earlier in the campaign.

National coach Kobi Kuhn was handed a 62nd birthday present with the extension of his contract until 2008. Presuming he sees it out, he will now be in charge for the Euro 2008 finals, to be co-hosted by Switzerland and Austria.

Miroslav Blazevic, who led Croatia to third place at France 98, has returned to Swiss football with bottom side Neuchatel Xamax. The veteran coach replaces Alain Geiger, fired after seven straight League defeats. Blazevic was boss of the Swiss national team in 1976 and had earlier spells at Grasshopper, Lausanne and Sion. He was recently sacked himself, by underperforming Croatian champions Hajduk Split, but got off to a winning start at his new club. Xamax beat Schaffhausen 1-0 to end their dreadful run.

Ivar von Rulach

AUSTRIA

'Tsar' steps down

Sturm Graz president Hannes Kartnig has announced he will not run for re-election after 13 years at the helm, citing the criticism he has received in

recent years after some mediocre League showings. "I have had to accept too many humiliations in the past few seasons, and those who attacked me will now get the chance to prove they can do better," Kartnig said. "The stress I have as a president must come to an end. I have to start looking after myself."

The 54-year-old, dubbed "Tsar Hannes", oversaw Sturm's first League title triumph in 1997-98, another the following season, three domestic Cup wins and two runs in the Champions League group stages. But the club have failed to finish in the top half of the domestic League in any of the past three seasons.

Kartnig, who has ploughed a great deal of money into Sturm, does not want to completely sever his ties with the club. After anointing his deputy, Carlo Platzer, as his successor, he said: "I am expecting to become [Sturm's] honorary president once I have passed on the business to Carlo. After all, they owe me one."

Rapid Wien coach Josef Hickersberger has been lined up to retake the national team reins from next year following the dismissal of Hans Krankl. Hickersberger, who steered Rapid to the League title last season, previously led Austria between 1987 and 1990. Krankl got the push after the team finished only third in their World Cup qualifying group.

Harry Miltner

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

Kerr ditched

The national team are in search of a new coach after the FA decided not to renew Brian Kerr's contract, which ran out at the end of the World Cup qualifying campaign. Kerr, in charge since January 2003, paid the price for failing to lead the Republic to the finals; his side could manage only a 0-0 draw at home to Switzerland in the final qualifier, meaning they finished fourth in Group 4.

Derry City beat University College Dublin 2-1 in the League Cup Final.

Sean Creedon

LIECHTENSTEIN

Shala signed up

Vaduz have signed Serb defender Rahim Shala from Swiss side Lugano as a replacement for Steve Gohouri, now at Young Boys Berne. Meanwhile, Vaduz will be without midfielder Marius Zarn for five months with a serious back injury.

International striker Thomas Beck has moved from Chiasso to Kriens.

Graeme Crawford

Pauleta on a high as team go back to back

PORTUGAL

THE NATIONAL TEAM made history by qualifying for consecutive World Cup finals for the first time, following victories over Liechtenstein and Latvia in their final group matches. After a lacklustre 2-1 win against Martin Andermatt's fragile team, Luiz Felipe Scolari's side got their act together and swept aside Latvia 3-0 at Porto's Dragao stadium. Pauleta scored twice to become Portugal's all-time leading scorer with 42 goals. Eusebio, the previous record holder, called Pauleta after the match to congratulate him.

Benfica's international midfielder Petit was in the dock after stamping on Guimaraes player Targino during a League match. The incident went unnoticed by the referee, but was spotted by television cameras, and Petit now faces a lengthy ban.

Petit's misdemeanour came shortly after FC Porto's Dutch coach, Co Adriaanse, had criticised the violent nature of the League, blaming the lenient yellow card rule for the level of aggression displayed by top-flight teams. In Portugal, a player gets a one-match ban after receiving five yellow cards, and will only be sanctioned again after being booked another five times.

Pedro Pinto

Top man...Pauleta hails the first of his double against Latvia

The end for Anthuenis

BELGIUM

THE FEDERATION HAS decided to terminate the contract of national coach Aime Anthuenis at the end of the year following his failure to steer Belgium to the World Cup finals. The team's slight hopes of snatching even a play-off place were dashed when they lost 2-0 at home to Spain in their penultimate qualifier.

Anthuenis, who also failed to guide Belgium to the Euro 2004 finals, will leave with a record of 12 wins, seven draws and 10 defeats in 29 games since the team are not scheduled to play again until next year. The final game of the coach's three-year reign also produced a disappointing result – a 1-1 draw away to Lithuania in the last World Cup qualifier – despite the hosts finishing with only 10 men. Karel Geraerts gave Belgium the lead on his debut, but Olivier Deschacht cancelled it out when heading into his own net.

Deschacht's club, Anderlecht, extended their record Champions League losing run to nine games when going down 1-0 at home to Betis on the second group matchday. The night got even worse for Westerlo striker Bjorn De Wilde, an Anderlecht fan, who had his nose broken when attacked on his way home from the game by a group of Anderlecht supporters, who recognised him as a rival club's player. "It was horrible," De Wilde said, "especially when you consider that I am a true Anderlecht fan."

The bottom two top division sides at the start of October both sacked their coaches. La Louviere, without a win in nine games since the start of the season, gave Emilio Ferrera his marching orders following a 3-0 home defeat by FC Brussels. His humiliation had been heightened when the visiting fans, who had ousted Ferrera from his previous post in charge of Brussels, took up the cry of the home supporters chanting for the coach's dismissal.

Germinal Beerschot Antwerp said farewell to Marc Brys just five months after he led them to victory over champions Club Brugge in the Belgian Cup Final. His replacement is the much-travelled Jos Daerden.

Nicholas Harling

Losing out...Anderlecht's Mbo Mpenza is beaten by Juanito of Betis

That champion feeling...MyPa's players and backroom staff celebrate a long-overdue title success

MyPa hit No 1 at last

FINLAND

MYLLYKOSKEN PALLO have finally won their first League championship, having finished runners-up no fewer than five times and third three times since winning promotion to the top flight in 1992. The team from the small southern town of Anjalankoski secured the title with an emphatic 3-0 win over Tampere United with two matches to go.

"We were the most consistent team of the season," said coach Ilkka Makela. "Our game is based on sound defending, but I take issue with people who say that we play only defensive, safety-first football."

There was bitterness on the European front, however, after MyPa lost to Grasshopper of Switzerland in the UEFA Cup first round. Makela's team drew the first leg 1-1 in Zurich and appeared to have taken the lead in the return after Sampsa Timoska headed home Tuomo Kononen's free-kick. Ukrainian referee Vitalii Godulyan signalled a goal but reversed his decision on consulting the fourth official after heated protests from Grasshopper players. They claimed Kononen took the free-kick before Godulyan signalled he could do so. The Swiss side went on to win 3-0 to reach the group stage.

"It was a farce," Makela stormed. "I have never seen a situation where a referee allows a goal then disallows it after negotiating with the fourth official. We have been hard done by." MyPa made an official complaint to UEFA but in vain.

Pentti Hietanen

NORWAY

Mission accomplished

After the below-par performance against Scotland in September, when Norway lost 2-1 in Oslo, the players got the result they needed in their penultimate World Cup qualifier on October 8, when beating Moldova 1-0 at home. That guaranteed Norway a play-off spot and their final qualifier against Belarus, another 1-0 win, was academic. Age Hareide's side now meet the Czech Republic over two legs for a place in the finals.

In the League, Start leapfrogged Valerenga back to the top of the table on goal difference after beating them 3-0 at home. However, both sides lost their next game, with Valerenga's 1-0 defeat at home to Lyn bringing the latter into the championship frame.

Sigurd Odegaard

DENMARK

Copenhagen's bitter exit

FC Copenhagen failed to match rivals Brondby in reaching the UEFA Cup group stage after losing to a highly controversial last-minute penalty in their first round clash with Hamburg. Copenhagen drew 1-1 in Germany in the first leg and were poised to progress on away goals after keeping the return scoreless. However, English referee Matt Messias awarded Hamburg two second-half penalties, having apparently seen a handball by a Copenhagen defender each time. Sergej Barbarez missed the first but Rafael Van der Vaart converted the second. Peter Moller and Michael Silberbauer were both sent off for protesting the referee's decision.

Copenhagen's consolation was to stay top of the domestic League, keeping closest challengers and defending champions Brondby at bay by drawing 1-1 away.

The national team missed a World Cup play-off place by a point, despite winning their last three group games. Denmark followed up their 6-1 September demolition of Georgia by beating Greece 1-0 at home and Kazakhstan 2-1 away, but were pipped by Turkey for the Group 2 runners-up spot behind Ukraine.

Jim Holden

ICELAND

Fram finally fall

Fram, the League's great escape artistes, finally lost their top-flight place after being routed 5-1 at home

by champions FH on the last day of the season. The Reykjavik side had avoided the drop in dramatic fashion in each of the six previous seasons and even this term went into the final day as the best-placed side of the three candidates for the one remaining relegation berth. But there was no escape this time.

With seconds to play, Fram trailed 4-1 to FH, while IBV were losing 1-0 at Fylkir. That meant the two sides were level on points and goal difference, but Fram had scored more goals. However, an injury-time goal by former Fram player Tryggvi Gudmundsson put his old club down by a single goal. Grindavik, the other relegation candidates, stayed up by beating Keflavik 2-1. Throttur were already relegated; Breidablik and Vikingur are the promoted sides.

There was more anguish for Fram a week later, when they lost 1-0 to Reykjavik rivals Valur in the Cup Final.

Rab Christie

ESTONIA

TVMK close in

TVMK are within striking distance of their first League title in 14 years after beating defending champions and closest challengers Levadia Tallinn 2-1 away in early October. This put them eight points clear with five games left, prompting Levadia coach Tarmo Ruutli to concede the title.

TVMK's Tarmo Neemelo has hit 37 goals, closing on the League record 39 set by Tor Henning Hamre in 2003.

Andres Must

LATVIA

Metalurgs end Skonto era

Metalurgs Liepaja won their first League title since 1958, ending Skonto Riga's world record run of consecutive championship successes. Skonto, who had won all 14 since Latvian independence in 1991, conceded their crown with four games to play as Metalurgs took a 13-point lead.

The new champions, coached by former Lithuania boss Benjaminas Zelkevicius, made sure of the title with a 5-1 hammering of Ventspils, which was also revenge for their 2-1 Cup Final defeat six days earlier.

Andres Must

WALES

Captain Giggs leads revival

After 14 competitive games without a win and 486 minutes without a goal the national side broke the spell with a 3-2 World Cup qualifying victory against Northern Ireland in Belfast. Ryan Giggs set up two of the goals and scored the winner to suggest he is relishing the role of skipper he was handed earlier in the year. The Manchester United winger then scored both goals in the 2-0 win over Azerbaijan that wrapped up an otherwise disappointing campaign.

Mel Thomas

NORTHERN IRELAND

Goals galore for Linfield

Linfield, last season's runners-up, went on a goal spree as the new League campaign got under way, hitting 18 in their first three games to head the table. The Blues kicked off with a modest 2-1 home win against promoted Glenavon but then demolished Institute 9-2 away and Coleraine 7-2 back in Belfast. Peter Thompson hit hat-tricks against both Institute and Coleraine, as well as one of the goals in the opening fixture.

Roy Kitson

Djurgardens back on top

SWEDEN

Pointing to the exit...Tom Prahl is being replaced as Malmo coach

DJURGARDENS CLINCHED THE League championship for the third time in four years after drawing 0-0 at Orgryte in the penultimate round. IFK Gothenburg, the only team that could catch them, lost 3-2 at Hammarby and had to settle for the runners-up spot.

Outgoing champions Malmo, in a battle for third spot with one game to play, tried to put a disappointing season behind them by announcing the appointment of coach Soren Akeby to replace Tom Prahl. Ironically, Akeby, who has been with Danish club AGF Aarhus for the past two years, steered Djurgardens to their championship successes of 2002 and 2003.

Prahl, whose contract runs out at the end of the season, suffered a dismal autumn. As well as relinquishing the League title, Malmo also failed to reach the Champions League group stage – losing to Swiss underdogs Thun in the third qualifying round – and were then beaten by Besiktas in the UEFA Cup first round to miss out on the group stage of that competition.

Sundsvall and Assyriska were relegated, while AIK Stockholm and Osters IF, two classic names in Swedish soccer, regained their places in the top flight.

Sweden booked their World Cup place, despite losing 1-0 in Croatia, because they were one of the two best European group runners-up. They rounded off their qualifying campaign with a 3-1 home win against Iceland.

Pentti Hietanen

I'm down, we're out...Kenny Miller rues a missed opportunity against Belarus

Wheels come off Walter's wagon

SCOTLAND

THE NATIONAL TEAM'S revival under former Rangers and Everton manager Walter Smith came to a shuddering halt with a 1-0 home defeat by Belarus. It effectively ended Scotland's hopes of qualifying for the World Cup finals, and they were comprehensively outplayed by the Belorussians.

Under Smith, who succeeded Berti Vogts last December, the Scots produced two fine performances in their September qualifiers – a 1-1 draw at home to Italy and a 2-1 win in Norway. They also followed up the Belarus game with a 3-0 win in Slovenia in the final qualifier, their biggest away victory for 12 years, though it was scant consolation.

Hearts kept their League lead, though they lost their 100 per cent record – and nearly their unbeaten one – at lowly Falkirk in early October. Steven Pressley's own goal midway through the second half put them 2-0 down but the Scotland defender scored twice at the right end to snatch a 2-2 draw. Hearts also drew their next game, 1-1 at second-placed Celtic, to stay three points clear.

Alan Fairley

New star Nuri's dream debut

TURKEY

A TUMER METIN goal was enough to bring Turkey victory in Albania in their final World Cup qualifier and snatch a place in the play-offs. They will meet Switzerland over two legs for a place in the finals.

The team were given a huge morale boost going into the Albania clash when beating World Cup hosts Germany 2-1 in a friendly in Istanbul a few days earlier. A new Turkish hero emerged in the shape of 17-year-old midfielder Nuri Sahin, a star of the recent World Under-17 Championship and a Bundesliga phenomenon with Borussia Dortmund. Nuri needed just two minutes on his senior debut as a late substitute to get on the scoresheet. That made it 2-0 to the hosts, who had gone ahead through Halil Altintop, another talented Turkish product of the German system.

Nuri was born in Germany, has been on Dortmund's books since he was 12 and this season became the youngest player in Bundesliga history, aged 16 years and 335 days. But he was wooed by the Turkish national team, and now they are gloating as Germany rue what they have missed.

Nuri was so excited after being selected for the Germany game that he couldn't sleep. "I was tossing and turning with nerves. I kept thinking: 'Oh my God, what if [coach] Fatih Terim asks me to play.' Near the end, he called me and said: 'This is the first [cap] but I hope there will be 100 more. Don't get over-excited.' I could never have imagined I would play against Germany and score."

As for comparisons to other prodigies, he insists he is one of a kind. "I'm not Rooney, I'm Nuri."

Suna Erdem

Breaking through...team-mates converge on Nuri (No 20) to congratulate him on his first goal for Turkey in the 2-1 win over Germany

SERBIA & MONTENEGRO

Teamwork wins the day

The national team won their final two World Cup qualifiers – 2-0 away to Lithuania and 1-0 against Bosnia-Herzegovina in a packed Red Star Belgrade stadium – to go through as group winners and consign favourites Spain to the play-offs.

Mateja Kezman was the hero, scoring in both games as he had done in the previous two qualifiers, but the team was the star. Indeed, the national side has seldom shown such great collective play and spirit.

The success of Serbia & Montenegro was maybe a surprise (they were only third seeds in Group 7 when the draw was made), but it was fully deserved. Ilija Petkovic's team were unbeaten in their 10 games – six wins and four draws – and conceded only one goal.

Vladimir Vermezovic quit as Partizan Belgrade coach three days after the club's shock UEFA Cup exit at the hands of Maccabi Petach Tikva. Partizan won the first leg 2-0 in Israel, but unbelievably lost 5-2 in the return. Former Hertha Berlin boss Jurgen Rober has taken over but the German lost his first match in charge, the Belgrade derby. Red Star's 2-0 home win put them top, overtaking surprise early leaders OFK Belgrade.

Dejan Savicevic, the ex-Red Star and Milan player and now Montenegrin FA president, has broken both wrists and his pelvis in a road accident.

Vladimir Novak

SLOVENIA

Oblak set to stay

National coach Branko Oblak looks set to stay despite failing to guide Slovenia to the World Cup finals. Suggestions that 2002 World Cup boss Srecko Katanec would retake the reins proved unfounded after he insisted that he had given up coaching for good.

A 1-0 defeat away to group winners Italy, coupled with Norway's

1-0 win at home to Moldova, meant the Slovenians would fall short of the play-offs no matter what happened in the final round of matches. They then lost 3-0 at home to Scotland to make it a truly dismal end to the campaign.

Ermin Siljak has announced his international retirement. The 32-year-old Excelsior Mouscron striker hit 14 goals in 48 matches.

Domzale continued to lead the way in the League, unbeaten after 11 games and with a remarkable goals record of 31 for, five against.

Zdravko Reic

BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

Blaz under pressure

The national team's 1-0 World Cup qualifying defeat in Serbia & Montenegro means coach Blaz Sliskovic has now failed three times to lead the side to a major finals tournament. A win would have put Bosnia-Herzegovina into the play-offs and eliminated Serbia but the defeat – after which captain Sergej Barbarez announced his international retirement – meant their neighbours won the group and Bosnia finished third. Sliskovic, in charge for four years, is the country's longest-serving coach, but his contract ends in February and an extension is now in the balance.

The Belgrade game was marred by violence on the terraces, with home supporters throwing seats, bottles and smoke bombs at their Bosnian counterparts. Six visiting fans needed surgery for serious injuries.

Zdravko Reic

ISRAEL

Moment of truth for Grant

Coach Avraham Grant's job is on the line after Israel failed to reach the World Cup finals. Although they only just missed out on the play-offs – on goal difference to Switzerland – and were in a very competitive group that also contained France and the Republic of Ireland, Grant was widely criticised for the team's distinctly conservative approach.

Striker Pini Balili hinted that Grant had to go if Israel were to have any hope of making the Euro 2008 finals. Although there was support within the FA for Grant, chairman Itche Menahem said time should be taken to consider other candidates.

Derek Fattal

MACEDONIA

Experience pays off

Caretaker national coach Boban Babunski put his trust in experience for the final World Cup qualifier, and it paid off as Macedonia earned a creditable 0-0 draw away to group winners Holland. Babunski, who took over after Slobodan Santrac quit, suffered a 5-1 hammering by Finland in his first game in charge. In an attempt to stop the rot, he recalled no fewer than four previous captains to his squad against Holland – Petar Milosevski, Goce Sedloski, Artim Sakiri and Georgi Hristov, the latter after a two-year gap.

Promoted Makedonija were the surprise package of the League's early rounds, leading the table with 19 points after eight games.

Michel Stojmanovski

MALTA

Farewell to Heese

Horst Heese has stood down after 10 years in the national team set-up, first as technical director then head coach, and his tenure ended on a relative high. Although Malta were bottom of their World Cup qualifying group, they finished with creditable draws against group winners Croatia and Bulgaria.

"I have enjoyed every minute," Heese said. "Sometimes I had to face the critics but it is part of the game."

Sliema Wanderers are on track to make it four League titles in a row after winning their first seven games of the new campaign.

Bulgarian coach Atanas Marinov quit Marsaxlokk after Ray Farrugia was hired as technical director.

Domenico Aquilina

Oh no...Rehhagel's World Cup hopes dive

Srna spot on for finals

CROATIA

THE NATIONAL TEAM kept up their impressive record of qualifying for major finals when securing their berth at Germany 2006 with a 1-0 home win against Sweden. Croatia have now made it to five of the six most recent World Cups and European Championships (their only miss was Euro 2000), a notable achievement for a country with a population of just 4.5 million.

Victory over Sweden, courtesy of a Darijo Srna penalty, also maintained Croatia's unbeaten home record in qualifying matches since independence – a European record of 28 matches (19 wins, nine draws).

Former national team boss Miroslav Blazevic has had a turbulent month, being sacked by champions Hajduk Split following a 1-0 home defeat by Rijeka which kept them in mid-table. That came on the back of a humiliating 8-0 aggregate defeat by Debrecen of Hungary in the Champions League qualifiers. But Blazevic quickly found another job, at Swiss side Neuchatel Xamax, with Ivan Gudelj taking the Hajduk helm.

Zdravko Reic

Germany here we come...Darijo Srna celebrates his winner against Sweden

All over for Otto's men

GREECE

THE TEAM THAT came from nowhere to win Euro 2004 appear to have reached the end of the line after failing to make the World Cup finals. A 1-0 defeat in Denmark meant that their final qualifier, at home to Georgia – a 1-0 win – was effectively nothing more than a farewell for the squad, many of whom are over 30 and may now retire from the international scene.

Coach Otto Rehhagel was also thought likely to quit, despite being offered a two-year extension and having enjoyed a largely successful four-year reign.

"Mr Rehhagel is the most successful coach in the history of the national team, and it is his decision whether to stay or not," said defender Takis Fissas. "We the players, of course, want him to stay, to continue his work. We honestly thought we would qualify for the World Cup, but that's sport – one moment you are on top, the next moment you are not."

The press and Rehhagel himself have been conducting their own post-mortems. "After winning Euro 2004, the team lost much of its talent due to injuries, the defence was not as tight as it used to be and the element of surprise was lost as everyone was now playing against the European champions and found an antidote," Michalis Tsohos wrote in *Sportime*.

Rehhagel said: "Denmark's victory was a fair one. The problem with the last few matches is we couldn't score, and this is something we repeated today. We lost the ball too easily."

Lou Economopoulos

We're on our way...Tomas Jun celebrates his goal which helped the Czechs to a crucial victory in Helsinki

Jun blooms to keep the dream alive

CZECH REPUBLIC

A 3-0 WIN over Finland secured the Czech Republic second place in their qualifying group and now are two games away from reaching their first World Cup finals since 1990. They face a play-off against Norway, the first leg away on November 12 and the return four days later, for a place in the finals.

Karel Bruckner's injury-plagued team had just been beaten 2-0 by Holland in Prague, which left them needing to win in Helsinki to avoid elimination. With strikers Jan Koller, Milan Baros and Vratislav Lokvenc all unavailable, the coach opted to start with 22-year-old Tomas Jun up front. The Trabzonspor forward responded with a goal after six minutes, and the Czechs sealed victory in the second half through Tomas Rosicky and Marek Heinz.

A misunderstanding between Bruckner and Pavel Nedved proved an unwelcome distraction before the last two qualifiers. Interviewed on TV shortly before the Holland game, the Juventus star said that, following talks with Bruckner, he was considering coming out of international retirement. But stung by media reports suggesting the coach had ruled out persuading any player to return to the national team, Nedved said he had changed his mind. Bruckner, though, insisted he had been misquoted, adding: "Pavel reacted to things I never said." The FA issued a statement confirming Nedved was welcome to return.

Champions Sparta Prague have dismissed coach Jaroslav Hrebik following a turbulent start to the season. The team have suffered a run of poor results, while Karel Poborsky quit as captain in protest against Hrebik's methods. He was promptly demoted to the B team as punishment for his public dissent, then loaned to Second Division Ceske Budejovice, a club Poborsky partly owns. Without him, Sparta suffered an embarrassing 1-0 loss to Thun in their second Champions League group game.

Worsening relationships between Hrebik and Sparta's other senior players led to internationals Lukas Zelenka and Jaromir Blazek being dropped for a League game against Teplice. That proved to be the coach's last in charge, since the 2-1 defeat left Sparta in only 11th place, nine points behind leaders Slovan Liberec. Hrebik's replacement is Slovak coach Stanislav Griga, a former Sparta player.

Sam Beckwith

RUSSIA

Skirmish over refs

CSKA Moscow coach Valeri Gazzayev has been fined £2,600 for "raising his voice" at referee Mikhail Khodyrev and stepping out of the technical zone several times during his side's 0-0 League draw away to FC Moscow.

Gazzayev's behaviour exemplifies the widespread and growing dissatisfaction with match officials among Russian coaches, players and fans. In turn, top division referees have complained that the conditions under which they have to work are intolerable, claiming they are reproached either for bias or a lack of professionalism after almost every game.

In response to the situation, FA president Vitali Mutko has already introduced a number of experienced foreign referees to the Russian game and promised more "imports" before the end of the season. Opponents of the idea have claimed that foreign officials make just as many mistakes as Russian referees. The response of the pro-foreigners lobby is "at least we know for sure they have not been bribed".

The national team just missed out on a World Cup qualifying play-off place after being held to a 0-0 draw away to Slovakia in their final game. The two sides finished level on points and head-to-head record behind group winners Portugal, but Slovakia took the runners-up spot because of a better goal difference.

Victor Gusev

ROMANIA

Becali bails out

Controversial Steaua Bucharest owner Gigi Becali has decided to sell all his shares in the club, to two of his nephews and a brother-in-law. However, the former shepherd turned real estate businessman suggested he would still have an interest in the club when saying: "I'll remain the god and my nephews will be the saints."

Before selling his stake, Becali appointed former Steaua star Marius Lacatus as executive president.

The national team caused great disappointment when failing to reach a major finals for the third successive time. Romania missed out on even a qualifying play-off place for Germany 2006, despite winning their final four group games. Captain Adrian Mutu apologised to supporters, saying his seven-month absence because of a drugs ban had been partly responsible for Romania missing out. But he certainly did all

he could to try to make amends, scoring all Romania's five goals in the three qualifiers he was available for since his ban ended – against Andorra (2-0), the Czech Republic (2-0) and Finland (1-0).

Radu Timofte

POLAND

Through despite defeat

Poland's goalscorer, Tomasz Frankowski, conceded that England deserved to win the sides' World Cup qualifying clash in Manchester, which finished 2-1. The result meant England went above Poland to win Group 6, though both countries had already qualified directly for the finals before the game.

"We can play much better and failed to cope with [England's] pressure," said Frankowski, who equalised with an excellent volley just after Michael Owen had put the hosts ahead shortly before half-time. "After the first half we wanted to keep the draw till the end. But England had more scoring opportunities, played better and they deserved the victory."

Frank Lampard scored the winner in the 81st minute.

Fresh from missing out once more on the Champions League group stage, Wisla Krakow crashed out of the UEFA Cup, too, losing 4-0 on aggregate to Portugal's Vitoria Guimaraes. But Wisla are still dominating the domestic scene, leading the table by three points from Lech Poznan and still unbeaten after eight games.

Korona Kielce striker Grzegorz Piechna is on course to set a unique goalscoring record. He finished top scorer in the Fourth, Third and Second Divisions in the past three seasons, and has already hit nine in nine games in his debut top-flight campaign.

Dariusz Kurowski

HUNGARY

Honved get the heave

Honved have been thrown out of the top division, the Borsodi Liga, for failing to pay former coach Barnabas Tornyi £100,000 in wages. The club must begin next season in the Second Division and are banned from all transfer activity.

Fehervar are this season's surprise package, leading the championship race after winning six of their opening seven games. Aurel Csertoi's team, formerly known as Videoton, have conceded just three goals, with Romanian goalkeeper Daniel Tudor in excellent form.

Peterjon Cresswell

AZERBAIJAN

Bad case of the Blues

Hazar Lenkoran are nicknamed the Caucasian Chelsea because of their big budget but their early season results were so bad that Turkish coach Rasim Car was given his marching orders. Hazar won their opening League game but then lost the next four. The final straw for Car was a 2-1 home loss to Shahdag.

Army club MOIK Baku have been allowed to continue playing in the top division despite finishing in the relegation zone last term after FK Shamkir, Karat Baku and promoted Energetik Mingacevir all withdrew for financial reasons. The FA was keen to engineer a reprieve for MOIK since their squad contains many Azeri Under-21s and top-flight football was understandably viewed as beneficial for them. MOIK did their own bit by making dark threats about the Under-21s in their ranks being turned over to military service if the club were forced to play at a lower level.

Vladimir Kalinkovich

Artmedia enjoy historic win

SLOVAKIA

ARTMEDIA BRATISLAVA achieved the best result by any Slovak club in modern times when coming from 2-0 down away to FC Porto to win 3-2 in their second Champions League group game. No Slovak club had previously gained a point in the competition's group stages.

Vladimir Weiss's side had given a respectable showing in their opening group game, a 1-0 defeat at home to Internazionale two weeks before the Porto game, while their potential was clear from their 5-0 thrashing of Celtic during the qualifying rounds.

The national side moved closer to reaching their first major finals since independence when winning a qualifying play-off place for Germany 2006. A 0-0 draw at home to Russia in the final group game gave Slovakia the edge in the battle for runners-up spot behind Portugal and they will now play-off against Spain. Four days earlier, Dusan Galis's side had scrapped out a 1-0 win over Estonia.

Pavol Stracansky

Stop him!...Artmedia's Jan Durica tracks Benni McCarthy during the win over Porto

Problems...Oleh Blokhin

Surkis money looks safe

UKRAINE

FEDERATION PRESIDENT Hryhorii Surkis has announced big financial rewards for the national team players and staff following their qualification for the World Cup. However, Ukraine's poor display in their final qualifier, against Albania, makes it look more unlikely than ever that Surkis will have to pay the promised £1.5million bonus for winning the tournament.

Only a late goal from Ruslan Rotan salvaged a 2-2 draw at home to the Albanians, and Ukraine's showing, as in the 1-0 home defeat by Turkey in September, again exposed their lack of quality. Andrii Shevchenko, absent for the Turkey game, was withdrawn just before the hour against Albania having scored his side's first goal.

"To be successful in the World Cup finals we need to improve our team performance and not totally depend on our one star," said coach Oleh Blokhin after the Albania game.

The squad will receive £1.2m for reaching the finals, while they have also secured a £4m sponsorship deal with Kyiv Star, one of Ukraine's biggest mobile phone operators.

Kyiv Dynamo have shown a marked improvement under acting coach Anatoliy Demyanenko, extending their unbeaten run to 11 games and becoming the only club to have a 100 per cent away record. Demyanenko has taken the reins while Dynamo seek a successor to Leonid Buriak, fired after the humiliating 3-2 defeat by Thun in the Champions League qualifiers.

Oleg Zadernovsky

River run dry

ARGENTINA

Injury prone...Marcelo Gallardo's absences have not helped the plans of River coach Reinaldo Merlo

RIVER PLATE'S POINTS tally of just 13 from 10 opening championship games is their worst at that stage of a season since the so-called "short championships" were introduced in 1991. Although Reinaldo Merlo succeeded Leo Astrada as coach after just four games there has been little improvement in League form, and River also went out of the Sudamericana Cup at the hands of Corinthians of Brazil.

Merlo is already under fire for being too defensive, the same criticism he received during a previous spell in charge in 1989. Although the coach says he plays according to the players available, River have always been known for attacking football and a tally of just 12 goals in those first 10 League games is unacceptable. At the same time, the defence has looked shaky, especially when facing high balls.

In an attempt to shore things up, Merlo decided to bank on experience and recently moved seven younger players from the first-team squad down to the reserves. But the plan has been stymied to a large extent by the absence through recurring injuries of 29-year-old captain and midfielder Marcelo Gallardo.

The one bright spot is the form of 19-year-old Colombian Ramon Falcao Garcia, one of the few youngsters remaining in the first team.

The low point was a 1-0 defeat by modest Arsenal. The goal was scored by Uganda defender Ibrahim Sekagya, who ironically failed to impress in a trial at River three years ago.

Club president Jose Maria Aguilar has admitted he may have erred in not renewing the contract of successful coach Ramon Diaz in 2002, but the real problem is that River have continued to sell their best players without finding adequate replacements. This year, international midfielders Javier Mascherano and Luis Gonzalez have both departed, and the new signings have not cut the mustard. Recently, Aguilar has been talking about trying to sign River old boy Ariel Ortega, currently with Newell's Old Boys, but is either unaware or does not want to recognise that Ortega, now 31, is only a shadow of his former self.

Even more galling for River is the fact that eternal rivals Boca Juniors have risen to the top of the table, despite not playing eye-catching football. Coach Alfio Basile, who took over from Jorge Benitez before the start of the season, has yet to win over the fans but has the firm backing of Diego Maradona, now vice-president of the club's football division and who used to play under Basile for Argentina. A real boost for Boca is that Jorge Griffa, arguably the best Argentinian youth coach, is back at the club after a spell in Mexico.

San Lorenzo, whose young, largely home-grown team made the early running in the opening championship, dropped to sixth after defeats by Instituto and Argentinos Juniors.

Eric Weil

COLOMBIA

Player strike crumbles

The first football strike in Colombian history disintegrated as the players appeared to buckle under pressure from their club directors. The country's Association of Professional Footballers announced an indefinite stoppage on October 13, accusing the clubs of failing to respect basic workers' rights, such as providing proper written contracts and paying health and pension contributions. The players said they also wanted a share of television money.

At first, the players at 14 of the 18 top division clubs – Atletico Nacional, Envigado, Independiente Medellin and Tolima were the exceptions – voted in favour of the strike, which was due to take effect from the 14th round of matches in the closing championship.

But their resolve began to crumble when the Colombian League said the fixtures would go ahead anyway, using youth teams if necessary. The players at Quindio, Bucaramanga, Real Cartagena, Once Caldas, Chico and Atletico Huila then backed down, with other clubs then falling into line. In the end, only League leaders America held firm, fielding their youth team in a 2-1 defeat at Real Cartagena.

The situation at Once Caldas appeared to be typical. "We were very clear with the players, we made them see the legal problems they could face for refusing to work," said club director Juan Bernardo Botero. "We don't owe a single peso to any player, we have always met our obligations and paid them well."

Midfielder Arnulfo Valentierra summed up the players' dilemma when saying: "We want to support the union, but we have respect for Once Caldas because it's the institution that has given us everything."

Despite their defeat, America stayed top of the table, two points ahead of Pereira.

Brian Homewood

New recruit...Argentina-born Franco makes his Mexico debut against Guatemala

Franco call-up revives row

MEXICO

NATIONAL TEAM COACH Ricardo Lavolpe revived the long-standing row over naturalised players by calling up Argentina-born Guillermo Franco for the World Cup qualifier against Guatemala. Franco promptly scored and set up another two goals for Francisco Fonseca in the 5-2 victory. "I would say 80 per cent of the strikers who play in Mexico are foreigners but if one of them is a naturalised Mexican, I don't understand why I can't see what he can do," said Lavolpe.

Brazil-born Antonio Naelson has already become a regular fixture in Lavolpe's team, although, with Mexico already qualified for the World Cup, he was left out of the Guatemala game. Even the coach clearly thought that having two naturalised players in the side would be pushing his luck.

Naelson, however, is a different case. He has been in Mexico since 1997, is married to a Mexican and has a daughter born in the country. Franco arrived only three years ago, from San Lorenzo in Buenos Aires.

The subject of naturalised players has long been a thorny one in Mexico, and the latest recruitment produced the inevitable criticism. This was inevitably led by Hugo Sanchez, the former Real Madrid striker who now splits his time between being Pumas UNAM coach and Lavolpe's nemesis.

"It's very dangerous because we've already got two or three. That could become four, five or six and there will come a time when it is no longer the national team but a team of naturalised players," said Sanchez. "How sad it would be if we won a World Cup with naturalised players."

Spain-born Carlos Blanco, Mexico's first naturalised player, took part in the qualifying matches for the 1954 and 1958 World Cups; Argentina-born Carlos Lara played in the 1962 World Cup qualifiers; and Gabriel Caballero, another Argentina-born player, was in the 2002 finals squad.

America's 28-game unbeaten run ended when they lost 4-3 to Jaguares, who played the entire second half with 10 men after Felipe Ayala was sent off. But the defending champions still enjoyed a five-point lead in Group 1 of the opening championship. Pachuca and Monterrey topped the other groups.

Cruz Azul coach Ruben Omar Romano was rescued unharmed by police after being held for two months by kidnappers. He returned to the bench just three days later, taking over from his assistant, Isaac Mizrahi.

Brian Homewood

PARAGUAY

Chilavert rounds on Gamarra

Former national team captain and goalkeeper Jose Luis Chilavert has made another of his trademark outbursts, this time implying that defender Carlos Gamarra was not trying during a 4-0 World Cup qualifying defeat at home to Colombia four years ago. "He knows what happened," said Chilavert, who did not play in the game.

Paraguay had already qualified for the Korea/Japan finals, but Colombia needed to win and give their goal difference a big boost to have any hope of overtaking Uruguay in the race for a play-off place against Australia. In the event, Colombia finished level on points with Uruguay, who drew 1-1 with Argentina in their final match, but lost out because their goal difference was plus five against Uruguay's plus six.

The Paraguayan FA issued a statement backing Gamarra, who is set to play in his third World Cup in Germany next year, "in defence of his dignity and his honesty after the declarations made against him".

Former South American champions Olimpia continued their revival under Carlos Kiese, their fifth coach this year, winning their first five matches under his leadership to go top of the closing championship.

Brian Homewood

BOLIVIA

Bottom and bitter

Bolivia's miserable performance in the World Cup qualifiers prompted a slanging match between the federation and the players. Despite enjoying the advantage of playing their home games at 12,500 feet above sea level in La Paz, the national team won only four of their nine home games – their only victories of the campaign – and finished bottom of the South American standings.

"Thank God that's over," said federation president Walter Castedo. "Unfortunately, that's the standard of our players. I'm sorry, but I can't teach them how to play because I'm not the coach and I can't make them fitter because I'm not a PE teacher. When our players lift up their shirts, they look like me."

Striker Jose Castillo countered by saying: "It's the directors' failure. We've failed to qualify three times in a row because they're not well-organised. When they get themselves together, things will work out better."

Ovidio Messa, Bolivia's third coach of the 18-month campaign, quit after the team lost their last match 4-1 away to Peru.

Brian Homewood

CHILE

Unbeatable Buljubasich

Universidad Catolica goalkeeper Jose Maria Buljubasich smashed the Chilean League record when going 17 hours 33 minutes without conceding a goal.

No side managed to score against Catolica in the first 12 matches of the closing championship, and Buljubasich, an Argentinian, was last beaten during the first half of a 1-1 draw with Union Espanola in the opening championship semi-finals in June. The previous record of 16 hours 51 minutes was set by Cobreloa's Eduardo Fournier in 1985.

Brian Homewood

Last is best in league stage

UNITED STATES

Head to head...MetroStars' Sergio Galvan vies with Orlando Perez of Chivas

THE PLAY-OFF SYSTEM is fine for adding spice and excitement to the end of the MLS season. The struggle to qualify, then the drama of the knockout games keep the tension level high.

This year, the very last game of the regular season, Chivas USA v MetroStars, produced the most entertaining game so far, with MetroStars needing a win to squeak into the eight-team play-offs. There were chances galore at both ends, and somehow MetroStars ran out 2-0 winners despite Chivas having 26 shots to their 14.

But all that excitement comes at a price. The problem with the play-offs is that they devalue the regular season, particularly in a small league like MLS. After six months of games, only four of the 12 teams are eliminated, taking away much of the competitive edge. National coach Bruce Arena publicly bemoaned the fact that too many MLS games were meaningless, and he has a point. It is unusual for a season to end with a game as eventful as the Chivas-MetroStars affair. And as the play-offs do, in effect, begin a new season, it would appear to be more important for a team to make sure that they are in form at the end of the league stage, going into the knockout phase, than to peel off a stellar winning record during the regular season.

Chivas and fellow expansion team Real Salt Lake were two of the four clubs eliminated at the end of this year's league stage. The former started badly but perked up a lot as the season closed after bringing in a group of new players from Mexico. Even when losing, something of which they did plenty, they were always lively to watch.

This was not true of RSL, who like Chivas lost 22 of their 32 games. As the season reached its gloomy end, owner David W Checketts told the *Deseret Morning News*: "I can't take this...we're not going to accept this kind of performance." Also eliminated were Columbus Crew, who had fired coach Greg Andrulis mid-season, and, surprisingly, Kansas City Wizards, last year's losing championship finalists.

Of the eight play-off qualifiers, the two divisional winners – San Jose Earthquakes (Western Conference) and New England Revolution (Eastern Conference) – were the obvious favourites. But even MetroStars looked capable of reaching the Final, despite a see-saw season during which they brought in a new general manager, former national team defender Alexei Lalas, and then fired Bob Bradley, their coach for three years, just before the final run-in. Assistant coach Mo Johnston took over for the last three games, recording two wins and a draw to clinch an improbable qualification.

The other quarter-finals entrants were DC United, Chicago Fire, FC Dallas, Colorado Rapids and Los Angeles Galaxy.

Paul Gardner

Impact lose crown

CANADA

MONTREAL IMPACT failed in their bid to retain the United Soccer League First Division title after losing to eventual winners Seattle Sounders in the championship play-off semi-finals.

Impact had topped the regular season table despite losing six players to international duty at the CONCACAF Gold Cup during the summer. Two of the six then departed permanently – midfielder Sandro Grande to Norwegian side Viking Stavanger and striker Ali Gerba to Sundsvall of Sweden – but Impact still finished 10 points clear of second-placed Rochester Raging Rhinos.

However, Sounders, whom Impact beat in last year's Final, proved too much this time round as the Canadians lost 4-3 on aggregate to miss out on the chance of back-to-back championships.

The loss of players mid-term has caused concern to Impact. "We've never held on to players who had the chance to live their dream and go to Europe," said president Joey Saputo. "But this is the last time we let guys go in the middle of our season. We've got to learn from this."

Sounders went on to beat Richmond Kickers on penalties in the Final after a 1-1 draw to lift the title for the third time.

The League, which features 12 professional sides from the United States, Canada and Puerto Rico, is independent of the USA's Major League Soccer but is commonly judged to be one tier lower. Because Canada has no professional league, the USLFD is the highest level at which the country's clubs can play.

At the end of this year's regular season of 28 games, the top six progressed to the play-offs, with the top two going direct to the semi-finals, while the other four met in two head-to-head ties to determine the other semi-finalists.

Philippe Germain

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Gulf sides show the gulf

ASIAN CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

DEFENDING CHAMPIONS Al Ittihad booked a return trip to the Asian Champions League Final by comfortably disposing of South Korea's Busan I'Park in the semi-finals. The Saudi Arabians' opponents are 2003 champions Al Ain of United Arab Emirates, who also cruised through their semi against China's Shenzhen Jianlibao.

The results underlined the current gulf between clubs from the west and east of the continent.

Al Ittihad, coached by former Romania boss Anghel Iordanescu, stormed to a 5-0 win in the first leg in South Korea. All the goals came in the second half, from Saudi international Marzouk Al-Otaibi, former Monaco and Internazionale striker Mohamed Kallon, Tcheco, Saud Al-Khariri and Hamzah Idris. Kallon scored both goals in the 2-0 win back in Jeddah that eased Al Ittihad through.

"I congratulate my players because they played very cleverly and dominated both ties," said Iordanescu. "We are very happy because we are in the Final and we deserve to be there. We kept possession well and we certainly created more chances. We could have had five goals in the second leg, too."

Nigerian striker Nwoha Onyekachi hit a hat-trick for Al Ain in their 6-0 first leg demolition of Shenzhen in the Emirates. UAE international Subait Khater added a brace, with Shehab Ahmed getting the sixth goal. Milan Macala's side then held the Chinese champions to a 0-0 draw in the return to book their Final place.

Shenzhen coach Guo Ruilong was fired a few days later, although the club claimed the result against Al Ain was not the decisive factor. The real reason for his dismissal, they said, was that Guo had paid players bonuses following a friendly against Barcelona without first receiving approval.

Michael Church

Over you go...Ali Mesarri of Al Ain is caught by Shenzhen's Li Yi during the semi-final first leg in the Emirates

ASIAN ROUND-UP

● Veteran Serb coach Bora Milutinovic was fired by Al Sadd of QATAR after the team's Champions League quarter-final defeat by Busan I'Park of South Korea. During his time in Doha, Milutinovic guided Al Sadd to the Emir's Cup. Assistant coach Mohammed Al-Ammari has taken temporary charge.

● In SAUDI ARABIA, League champions Al Hilal beat Al Ahli 2-0 in the Final of the Prince Faisal bin Fahd Cup in Riyadh. Muhammad Al-Anbar and former Asian Player of the Year Nawaf Al-Temyat scored the goals.

● Syed Nayeemuddin has taken over as head coach of the INDIAN national team from Sukwinder Singh, who was fired after India lost a three-game series against bitter rivals Pakistan.

● Shandong Luneng reached the Final of the CHINESE FA Cup for the second year running after beating Beijing Guo'an 7-4 on aggregate. They now face League leaders Dalian Shide, who saw off Second Division leaders Xiamen. Xiamen's consolation is that they have already secured promotion to the top flight next season.

Michael Church & Azam Mahmood

Ripper!...Viduka is congratulated by Bresciano after scoring against Jamaica

Five-star Australia

OCEANIA

AUSTRALIA'S 5-0 demolition of Jamaica in a friendly in London gave them a morale boost ahead of the play-off against Uruguay for a World Cup finals berth.

Marco Bresciano, Archie Thompson, Mark Viduka, John Aloisi and debutant Joel Griffiths scored, but the most pleasing performance for coach Guus Hiddink came from striker Jason Culina, whom he recently signed for his club side, PSV, from Twente.

Melbourne Victory went top of the A League after thrashing Sydney FC 5-0. Victory leapfrogged Adelaide United, who lost twice in a row – 2-1 away to Sydney and then 4-2 at home to lowly Newcastle United.

● In FIJI, Lautoka claimed their first Inter Districts title for 20 years with a 2-0 win over holders Ba in a final marred by the dismissal of three players. Ba's Kiniviliame Naika was sent off for chopping down Nicholas Marinos, who was also butted by keeper Isikeli Seva late in the second half. That left Ba with nine men and gave Lautoka a penalty, which Alvin Avinesh tucked away. Jone Vonu Jnr scored the first goal, but was given a second yellow card for removing his shirt in celebration. Ba were thus denied the Double, having secured the League title a week earlier with a 1-0 win at closest challengers Navua.

Paul Moon

Youth counts for Gamba

JAPAN

J.LEAGUE LEADERS Gamba Osaka have benefited greatly from the goalscoring prowess of Brazilian forward Araujo this season, but credit for the club's rise to the top should also be given to their excellent youth policy.

Gamba, chasing their first senior J.League title, have won the country's Under-18 Youth Cup more times than any other team and their first-team squad contains 11 players who have come through the ranks. One of them, midfielder Hideo Hashimoto, now 26, is described by coach Akira Nishino as "simply irreplaceable; we have no other player like him", while 19-year-old left-winger Akihiro Ienaga has emerged as one of Japan's most exciting prospects.

Gamba now look to be in a two-horse title race with Kashima Antlers. The Osaka side were five points clear with seven rounds left.

Mike Plastow & Yumiko Nagae

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Down to the bare bones...Chesterfield's Saltergate ground has suffered from neglect under past regimes

Crooked as the spire

Owner Darren Brown bled Chesterfield dry for his own ends and the club, which nearly went out of business, is still trying to recover. David Conn reports

CHESTERFIELD, a former mining town on the edge of the Peak District national park, is not famous for much, except for its church with a fascinatingly crooked spire.

For 134 years, the town's football club was not greatly noted either. Theirs was a tale of dogged survival, having remained in existence since 1866, making Chesterfield the fourth oldest professional league club in England and therefore the world, their ground, Saltergate, spattered in lower division history.

The club's greatest moment came in 1997, when they made it to the FA Cup semi-finals and went 2-0 ahead at Old Trafford against a Middlesbrough side including Fabrizio Ravanelli and Juninho, before being pulled back to 3-3 and losing gallantly in the replay.

The Spireites' inspirational mood soured quickly, as the club's old-style chairman and owner, local businessman Norton Lea, kept money tight and did not invest in Saltergate, which became cramped and haggard compared to rebuilt grounds elsewhere. Then, in the summer of 2000, Lea announced he had sold the club to Darren Brown, 29, apparently a fledgling sports mogul, who folded the football club into his UK Sports Group portfolio, with the Sheffield Steelers ice hockey and Westfield Sharks basketball teams.

Brown, truly a gifted talker, signed lower division stars way out of Lea's price or wage range and Chesterfield steamed to the top of the Third Division playing flowing football the fans had not seen for years. So when stories emerged that all was not right, that creditors were standing around in the car park demanding to be paid, the Inland Revenue was threatening bailiffs, and that, according to Dean Newman and David Wood, two directors who resigned, £399,000 had gone out of the club, many refused to believe it.

However, Brown's business credentials did not bear scrutiny. He had worked in a gas showroom, sold faxes and photocopiers, then set up two printing companies, both of which were loss-making, one insolvent.

In January 2001, the Football Association launched an inquiry, which led to Chesterfield being charged with failing to declare cash from three turnstiles and defrauding a Football League transfer tribunal by presenting a false contract that understated the wages of striker Luke Beckett, signed from Chester City.

Chesterfield were found guilty, fined £20,000 and had nine points deducted, though they still won promotion. Brown was left untouched, and charges against the players for being involved with a cash bonus scheme were found not proven.

Jim Brown, the former Chesterfield and Scotland goalkeeper who has been the club's commercial manager since 1985, and three other office staff who gave evidence against Darren Brown, faced, among other unpleasantness, calls of

"Judas" from some on the terraces after the hearings.

"The club has built its reputation over 130 years," Jim Brown told me at the time. "Darren Brown has managed to destroy it in nine months."

An investigation by the Serious Fraud Office established what most informed fans realised within weeks of Brown's takeover – he'd had no money of his own and had emptied the club of the cash left in the bank by Lea. To buy the club, Brown had agreed to pay the former owner in instalments – £384,000 at first, then £500,000, then another £384,000 – and had borrowed the money round town for the first instalment. Once inside the club, Brown had paid Chesterfield's £399,000 to his UK Sports Group and used it to repay some of the people who had lent him the money to buy the club in the first place.

New lifestyle

He also used fistfuls of Chesterfield's money to pay debts owed by the Sheffield Steelers and to fund a lifestyle commensurate with his new status – £55,000 for a deposit on a new house, flash cars put on the club's bill, even a £2,500, top-of-the-range lawnmower. In total, Brown went through £800,000 before leaving the club on the edge of extinction.

Following the SFO's investigation, Brown was charged with 19 offences, including straightforward theft, and was jailed for four years last November after pleading guilty to two counts of fraudulent trading.

The club survived on the loyalty and support of the good people who rallied round it. In March 2001, Brown had handed the now insolvent club to Andrew Cooke, who offered it to the Chesterfield Football Supporters Society, a trust formed 16 days earlier at a meeting packed with 1,000 fans desperate for the club to be saved.

In addition to debts of £2million run up by Brown, the fans discovered Saltergate had been hocked to three individuals – Stewart Davies, Melvyn Laughton and Sean Verity, trading as The Sterling Consortium – who had advanced Brown £150,000, secured on Saltergate, for six months, charging "profit costs" of £50,000 and an "arrangement fee" of £30,000, plus legal fees.

Guilty of fraud...Darren Brown

The same individuals were, at a time of financial crisis in the lower divisions, offering to lend to other clubs such as Scarborough, Cambridge United, Barnsley and Carlisle. Davies actually owns Darlington now, after the club's former owner, George Reynolds, was unable to pay off a £4m loan, taken out with punishing rates of interest.

The shock and eye-watering rates of the Chesterfield loan, which threatened Saltergate and the club's existence, convinced most remaining doubters that Brown had been bad news. Businessmen Barrie Hubbard and Mike Warner paid the Sterling loan in full, and the CFSS immediately put the club into administration.

The work to restore Chesterfield to stability and dignity has been a grinding project, based on an alliance of the CFSS with Hubbard, Warner and two other better-off fans who have supported the club financially and are trying to develop it as a modern community club.

Neither the *Sky Sports Football Yearbook* nor the Association of Football Statisticians devotes a section to chairman-fraudsters, but Brown is thought to be the first chairman to have been convicted of committing fraud on his club.

The game's rogues' gallery would include Ken Richardson, the former Doncaster Rovers chairman who was convicted in 1997 of conspiracy to burn down his club's main stand, and many owners have sailed close to trouble from the days when cash first started to pour through the turnstiles of the "people's game".

Brown, milking Chesterfield with so little subtlety that within the first week the office staff were keeping a separate ledger for his dodgy payments, may have been the crudest, but not the first.

The Football League has since introduced the "fit and proper person test", which prohibits people from becoming club directors if they have unspent criminal convictions or a serious record of insolvency. Brown, though, would have passed this very basic test when he took Chesterfield over, and many believe England's historic football clubs remain far too vulnerable to fraud, pillage and plunder by men equipped only with front and a lorry-load of patter.

MEDIA WATCH

Warning sign...empty seats form a backdrop to Middlesbrough v Sunderland

Is the Premiership boring?

"Current attendances do not suggest the English game is in better shape than it has ever been, on and off the pitch, which is what its marketeers keep telling us. Empty seats suggest something else entirely: a game that has its sums wrong."

● *The Observer's* Paul Wilson gives his verdict on September 18

"On the day Arsene Wenger warned boring football could drive fans away from the game, an exclusive *Telegraph Sport* survey has revealed that fewer goals are being scored in the Premiership this season than before and goals are down almost 20 per cent on this stage last year."

● John Ley suggests *The Daily Telegraph's* statistics back the "boring" claim on September 21

"Systems have come under intense scrutiny, the lone striker shouldering the blame as well as the considerable responsibility that comes with trying to beat an entire back four without a single team-mate in support. As someone remarked at Anfield on Sunday, Peter Crouch's team-mates do not just come from another country, they play in one as well."

● Matt Lawton is convinced 5-4-1 is to blame in *The Daily Mail* on September 21

"England is in danger of becoming Italy, where, after a blooming of attacking football in the late 1980s, there has been a gradual retreat into a cautious, must-not-lose football. No wonder crowds in Serie A have dwindled. We are still some way off that mark, but unless the problems are addressed, fans here will continue to drift away."

● Niall Quinn draws a sensible comparison in *The Guardian* of September 23

"There are still absorbing, open encounters to be seen, but the prevailing pattern is more cautious. The best games are those that promise goals, but still make them hard to score. At the moment too many sides are not prepared to make promises they have to take risks to keep."

● *The Guardian's* David Lacey urges a less cautious approach on September 24

"You have to laugh at the fall in Premiership attendances and sudden in-depth analysis of what's gone wrong. Prices too high? Amazing. And who would have thought a supporter would object to arranging a day off work and buying an affordable but non-refundable rail ticket only to discover the chosen match was to be moved to 11.30am the following Sunday?"

● Patrick Barclay says the reasons behind the malaise are all too obvious in *The Sunday Telegraph* of September 25

"You can't have fans baying for success... but not expecting to contribute towards it with regular attendance and reasonable investment."

● Crystal Palace chairman and *Observer* columnist Simon Jordan says fans have to take at least some of the blame on October 2

TALENT SCOUT

TOMORROW'S STARS TODAY

Hedwiges MADURO

Mature by name and nature

AJAX YOUNGSTER Hedwiges Maduro is proving he is aptly named. His parents hail from the Dutch Antilles, and in Papiamento, a language widely spoken on the Caribbean islands, "hedwiges" means warrior and "maduro" means mature. Although the midfielder, born in Holland, is just 20 he has already shown his commanding qualities for both club and country after making a phenomenally quick rise to prominence.

Maduro made his debut for Ajax only in February, appearing as a substitute for the last five minutes of the UEFA Cup first knockout round second leg against Auxerre.

Ajax lost 3-1 on the night to go out of the competition and coach Ronald Koeman resigned. But the turmoil didn't affect Maduro. Under caretaker boss Ruud Krol and permanent successor Danny Blind, he quickly proved himself a key player. And with just 185 minutes of top-level club experience, he received a call-up from Holland coach Marco Van Basten for the World Cup qualifier against Romania in March.

Maduro's inclusion angered PSV and Feyenoord, Ajax's two great rivals, who believed their more experienced players had been shelved in favour of the newcomer and accused Van Basten, a former Ajax player, of bias.

But the coach knew very well what he was doing. Van Basten had become convinced of Maduro's qualities when he was assistant coach of Ajax reserves, and, sure enough, Maduro didn't disappoint when making his Holland debut as a substitute in that Romania game.

He also performed well in the 4-1 victory away in Finland in June, prompting Ruud Van Nistelrooy to say: "He is only 20 but is controlling our game. When he came in, suddenly things started to go very well."

Maduro's prowess has been such that he has consigned highly experienced team-mates to the bench – Mark Van Bommel and Edgar Davids with Holland and captain Tomas Galasek at Ajax. However, the youngster is determined not to let his sudden fame and success go to his head. He says: "I know what I can and can't do. My parents have taught me to stay down to earth and be humble."

Maduro learned his football in his hometown, Almere, before being spotted by Ajax in his early teens. Although his breakthrough was relatively late, he is now making up for lost time.

Maduro is a drummer in his spare time and his sense of rhythm is clear in the way he plays football. He has an unerring ability to keep his team in balance and control the tempo while also showing an exceptional reading of the game. These qualities were to the fore in the World Youth Cup this summer, when he proved the linchpin for Holland's Under-20 side. It wasn't a coincidence that they were eliminated in the quarter-finals when a tired Maduro appeared to be paying the price for a fairytale but busy few months.

Next year he will get a second chance to prove himself on the world stage, with the senior national squad in Germany. It will be the perfect occasion to show again why Hedwiges Maduro is living up to his name.

Klaas-Jan Droppert

FACT FILE

Club	Ajax
Country	Holland
Born	February 13, 1985, in Almere
Previous clubs	Waterwijk, FC Omniworld
International debut	March 2005, v Romania
International caps	8 (0 goals)

Anthony VANDEN BORRE

Anderlecht's discovery on their own doorstep

ANDERLECHT DID NOT have to send their scouts far and wide to discover Anthony Vanden Borre – his family home was just 200 metres from the club's Parc Astrid ground.

The right-back, who has just turned 18, was born in Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of Congo) but moved to Brussels as a little boy with his Belgian father, Congolese mother and four brothers and sisters. He was soon showing great promise, winning a much-prized spot in Anderlecht's junior ranks aged just eight.

Over the ensuing years, the youngster displayed great versatility – he is also adept in central defence or on the right of midfield – football intelligence, athleticism, pace and enterprise, and head coach Hugo Broos could not blood him quickly enough.

Vanden Borre made his League debut at 16 years and five months in the spring of 2004, giving a performance of amazing maturity in a win over Charleroi and following it up with a similarly composed showing in the intense atmosphere of a Standard Liege-Anderlecht tussle. "I'm not one to worry unnecessarily about things," says Vanden Borre. "Apart from the crowd noise, I treated these games just like any others I had played in. I followed the instructions of the coach, stayed concentrated and kept my game simple. It went well."

Belgium coach Aime Anthuenis thought so, too, and a mere five weeks after Vanden Borre's Anderlecht debut, he won his first cap for the *Diables Rouges*, as a late substitute in a friendly defeat at home to Turkey. Only one other player – Fernand Nisot in 1911 – had played for Belgium at a younger age.

"It's been great to play in the Champions League for Anderlecht and be part of the senior Belgium squad," Vanden Borre says. "But as far as I'm concerned, I've only made a few steps on a long journey. I know football has given me a wonderful opportunity in life and I don't want to waste it."

Nick Bidwell

FACT FILE

- **Club** Anderlecht
- **Country** Belgium
- **Born** October 24, 1987, in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo
- **International debut** April 2004, v Turkey
- **International caps** 7 (0 goals)
- **Honours** Belgian League 2004

Gunnar Heidar THORVALDSSON

Icelander driving home the goals

FORMER VAN DRIVER Gunnar Heidar Thorvaldsson may soon be delivering goals in the English Premier League having caught the eye with a prolific season for Halmstads of Sweden. The 23-year-old Icelander had hit 14 League goals with two games to play, putting him top of Sweden's scorers' chart. Yet even more significant for would-be buyers was the way he performed during Halmstads' surprise away goals victory over Sporting Lisbon in the UEFA Cup first round. The forward scored twice in the 4-4 aggregate draw and also displayed great pace, mobility, aerial power and the ability to play in either a two-pronged attack or as a lone front-runner.

"Thorvaldsson is a natural goalscorer," says Iceland co-coach Asgeir Sigurvinsson, who gave him his first cap as a substitute in a goalless friendly with Italy in Padua last spring. "Eight times out of 10 his instincts take him to where the chances are, and he's very hungry to make his mark."

Like Charlton defender Hermann Hreidarsson, Thorvaldsson hails from the volcanic archipelago of the Vestmann Islands (Vestmannaeyjar), just off Iceland. He came through the youth system of top local side IBV, making his first-team debut at 17 and buttoning down a regular starting place two years later. Although he was only a part-time player – his main job was as a delivery driver for a fish company – he successfully led the IBV line for four seasons, finishing club top scorer in three of them. That consistency prompted Halmstads to swoop in August 2004, but, once in Sweden, the excellent goalscoring form of on-loan Markus Rosenberg kept Thorvaldsson on the bench. However, with Rosenberg heading back to parent club Malmo late last year – and then on to Ajax this summer – the Icelander has truly come into his own.

Nick Bidwell

FACT FILE

- **Club** Halmstads (Swe)
- **Country** Iceland
- **Born** April 1, 1982, in Vestmannaeyjar
- **Previous clubs** IBV
- **International debut** March 2005, v Italy
- **International caps** 5 (1 goal)

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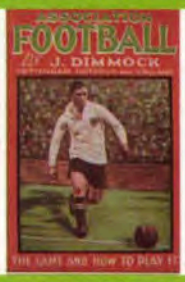

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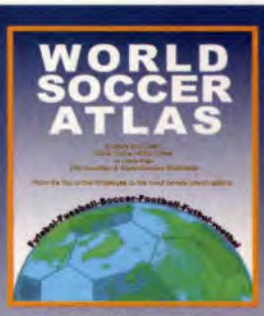

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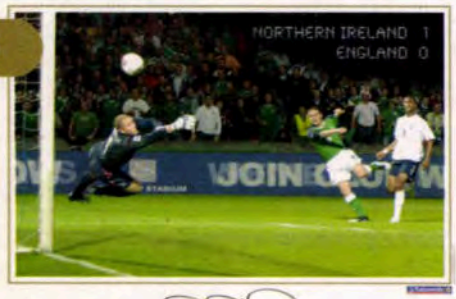

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Group 1

Oct 1 - Monrovia
Liberia 0
Zambia 5 (Lwipa 50, 82, Mweetwa 51, 63, Numba 61)
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Evehe (Cam)
Match played behind closed doors
Liberia: Swen - Kpoto, Penie (Popo 56), Dukuly, Dorbor, Barlee, Teah, Lewis, Garwo (Kicmett 87), Doe, Tondo (Wilson 46).
Zambia: Mweene - Hachilesa, Nketani, Phiri, Musonda, Kaposa (Sinyangwe 80), Mwaba, Mweetwa, Njovu, Numba (Mwandila 66), Chanda (Lwipa 46).

Oct 8 - Brazzaville
Congo 2 (Bouity 26, Mamouna-Ossila 56)
Togo 3 (Adebayor 40, Coubadja 60, 70)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 20,000. **Ref:** Shelmani (Lby)
Congo: Ngo, Kouvouama, Tsoumou, Djimbi (Ockakas 46), Sita, Ontsondo, Makita-Passy, Filanckembo (Bhebey 59), Kousiatama, Mamouna-Ossila (Makoundouraffet 85), Bouity.
Togo: Agassa - Nibombe, M Atte-Oudeyi, Aziawonou, Abalo, Mamah, Romao, Senaya, C-T Maman (M Salifou 58), Coubadja, Adebayor.

Oct 8 - Dakar
Senegal 3 (H Camara 18, 65, E H Diouf 23)
Mali 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 30,000. **Ref:** Maillet (Sey)
Senegal: Sylva - Mendy (Rahmane 8), Diakhate, Drame, Beye, Amdy Faye (Ndaw 69), Diatta, P B Diop, Ba, E H Diouf (Kamara 75), H Camara.
Mali: Tangara - F Diawara (B Toure 64), S Coulibaly, A Keita, Djimi Traore, Diallo (Demba 76), Sissoko (Dramane Traore 53), Kone, S Keita, Diamoutene, Kanoute.

GROUP 1 – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
TOGO	10	7	2	1	20	8	23
Senegal	10	6	3	1	21	8	21
Zambia	10	6	1	3	16	10	19
Congo	10	3	1	6	10	14	10
Mali	10	2	2	6	11	14	8
Liberia	10	1	1	8	3	27	4

Group 2

Oct 8 - Praia
Cape Verde Islands 0
Ghana 4 (Asamoah 5, Muntari 35, Gyan 75, Attram 87)
HT: 0-2. **Ref:** Daami (Tun)
Cape Verde Islands: Monteiro, Barros, Veiga, Mendes (Baptista 46), Da Veiga, Borges, D Gomes, Neves (Evora 61), E Gomes, Aguiar, A Gomes (Da Moura 68).
Ghana: S Adjei - Pantsil, Mensah, Pappoe, Issah, Laryea, Essien, Appiah, Muntari (Gyan 64), M Amoah (Edusei 83), Asamoah (Attram 72).

Oct 8 - Durban
South Africa 2 (Zuma 5, 52)
DR Congo 2 (Mputu 11, Nonda 44)
HT: 1-2. **Att:** 35,000. **Ref:** Mbera (Gab)
South Africa: Vonk - Zwane (Nomvete 16), A Mokoena, Evans, Morris, Katza, Tau, Pienaar, Phiri, Van Heerden (Nhzoko 80), Zuma.
DR Congo: Kalemba - Mubiala, Milambo, Nsumbu, Lubanzadjo, Ilongo (Kamudimba 69), Mbajo, Mputu (Mbala 82), Kasongo, Kabamba (Lelo 72), Nonda.

Oct 8 - Kampala
Uganda 2 (Masaba pen 30, Serunkuma 71)
Burkina Faso 2 (Kebe 15, Rouamba 75)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 1,433. **Ref:** Benouza (Alg)
Uganda: Kalyesubula - Masaba, Nsereko, Sekagya, Batabaire, Lawrence, H Mubiru (Massa 68), Serunkuma, Kasule, Ochama (Bongole 87), Mawejje (Balyejjusa 52).
Burkina Faso: Soulama - Ouattara, Habouna, Rouamba, Kabore (Toure 65), Tassembedo, Kere, Panandetiguiri, Nikiema (Minoungou 88), Kebe, Dagano.

GROUP 2 – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
GHANA	10	6	3	1	17	4	21
DR Congo	10	4	4	2	14	10	16
South Africa	10	5	1	4	12	14	16
Burkina Faso	10	4	1	5	14	13	13
Cape Verde Is	10	3	1	6	8	15	10
Uganda	10	2	2	6	6	15	8

Group 3

Oct 8 - Yaounde
Cameroon 1 (Douala 20)
Egypt 1 (Shawky 79)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 38,750. **Ref:** Coulibaly (Mli)
Cameroon: Souleymanou - Wome, Song, Kalla, Angbwa (Feutchine 82), Saidou, Olembe, Makoun (Kome 85), Douala (N'Diefi 71), Eto'o, Webo.
Egypt: El-Hadry - Abdel Wahab (T El-Sayed 64), El-Saqqa, Shawky, A Hassan, Abd Rabo, Fathi, Ghali (Zidan 63), Gomaa, Zaki, Moteab (Aboutraika 83).

Oct 8 - Omdurman
Sudan 1 (Tambal 89)
Ivory Coast 3 (Akale 22, Dindane 51, 73)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 20,000. **Ref:** Damon (SAf)
Sudan: Abu Mohamed - Hado, Lado, Bakhebt, Agab Sido (Amari 79), Hassan (E Abdel 57), Damar, K Ali, Karar, Saeed (Tambal 55), B Abdalla.
Ivory Coast: Barry - Akale (A Kone 90), K Toure, Zokora, Kouassi, Eboue (Doumbia 68), Djire, Meite (Siaka 60), Yapi, Drogba, Dindane.

Oct 9 - Cotonou
Benin 1 (R Chitou 60)
Libya 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 1,880. **Ref:** Mususa (Zim)
Benin: R Chitou - C Chitou, Hountonto, Sessegnon, Omotoyossi, Boco, Toclomiti, Salomon (Nassirou 56), Maiga (Balogoun 76), Adjamonsi, S Tchomogo.
Libya: De Agustini - Shushan, Guma Kara (Slil 57), Saftar (Masoud 57), Zuway, Al-Shibani, Hamadi, Al-Hamali, Eltreki, W Osman, Boubakr (Jalal 71).

GROUP 3 – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
IVORY COAST	10	7	1	2	20	7	22
Cameroon	10	6	3	1	18	10	21
Egypt	10	5	2	3	26	15	17
Libya	10	3	3	4	8	10	12
Sudan	10	1	3	6	6	22	6
Benin	10	1	2	7	9	23	5

Group 4

Oct 8 - Port-Gentil
Gabon 0
Algeria 0
Att: 37,000. **Ref:** Diouf (Sen)
Gabon: Bidonga - Ambourouet, Mouyouma (Ontsigui 27), Djissikadie, Nsi-Akoue, Moundounga, Zue (Mboussy 62), Moubamba, Antchouet (Mve-Mintsa 56), Mbanangoye, Nguema. *Sent off: Ontsigui 83min.*
Algeria: Mezair - Bougherra, Zaoui, Abdesslam, Yahia, Yacef (Fenier 89), Kraouche, Saifi (Hadi-Aissa 76), Metref (Benattia 88), Brahami, Boutabout.

Oct 8 - Abuja
Nigeria 5 (Martins 35, pen 75, Ayila 62, N Kanu pen 80, Odemwingie 89)
Zimbabwe 1 (Mwaruwari 70)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 45,000. **Ref:** Pare (BuF)
Nigeria: Enyeama - Yobo, Odiah, Taiwo, Ayila (Olofinjana 79), Oruma, Obodo, Nwaneri, Ayodele (N Kanu 68), Odemwingie, Martins (Aghahowa 86).
Zimbabwe: Murambadoro - Mwanjale, Makonese, Matola, Luphahla (Badza 64), Gombami, Rambanapasi, Kawondera (Matawu 86), P Ndlovu (Chandida 67), Yohane, Mwaruwari.

Oct 8 - Kigali
Rwanda 0
Angola 1 (Akwa 79)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 25,000. **Ref:** Guezzaz (Mor)
Rwanda: Nkunzingoma - Ndikumana, Gaseruka, Fritz, Said (Hategekimana 78), Sibomana, Mulisa (Bobo 68), Gatete, Ntaganda, Kabongo (Uwimana 70), Karekezi.
Angola: Joao Pereira - Jacinto, Yamba Asha, Jamba, Lebo Lebo, Figueiredo (Ze Kalanga 68), Andre, Flavio (Mantorras 60), Gilberto, Mendonca (Maurito 55), Akwa.

GROUP 4 – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
ANGOLA	10	6	3	1	12	6	21
Nigeria	10	6	3	1	21	7	21
Zimbabwe	10	4	3	3	13	14	15
Gabon	10	2	4	4	11	13	10
Algeria	10	1	5	4	8	15	8
Rwanda	10	1	2	7	6	16	5

Group 5

Oct 8 - Gaborone
Botswana 1 (Molwantwa 35)
Guinea 2 (O Bangoura 73, 76)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 16,800. **Ref:** Sowe (Gam)
Botswana: Tshelametsi - Thuma, Mogaladi, Matshameko (Ntshingane 82), Molwantwa, Amos, Gabanakgosi, Gabonamong, Motlhabankwe, Selolwane, Moatlhaping (Mothusi 86).
Guinea: Kemoko Camara - I Camara (I Bangoura 46), Balde, Jabi, H Kaba, K Sylla, D Kaba, Mansare (Morlaye Cisse 84), O Camara, Youla (O Bangoura 46), Abdoulkarim Sylla.

Oct 8 - Blantyre
Malawi 3 (Zakazaka 6, Mkandawire 49, 61)
Kenya 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 12,000. **Ref:** Codjia (Ben)
Malawi: Kapuza - Kondowe, Chilaponowa (Chipatala 59), Ndhlovu, Msowoya, Mponda, Ngambi, Kafoteka, Mkandawire (Kamaga 90), Kamwendo, Zakazaka (Wadaewa 77). *Sent off: Ngambi 87min.*
Kenya: Onyiso - Shaban (Hussein 30), Orodi, E Ochieng, G Owino, Simiyu (Tiego 66), J Owino, Mwalala, Echesa (Nyongesa 57), Abdurazak, Sirengo.

Oct 8 - Tunis
Tunisia 2 (Clayton 18, Chedli 69)
Morocco 2 (Chamakh 3, El-Karkouri 42)
HT: 1-2. **Att:** 60,000. **Ref:** Abd El Fatah (Egy)
Tunisia: Boumnijel - H Trabelsi, Hagui, Jaziri, Clayton (Yahia 51), Namouchi, Chedli, Jaidi, Benachour (Mnari 63), Bouazizi, Santos (Gmamdia 68).
Morocco: Lamyaghri - Regragui, Ouaddou, El-Karkouri, Benaskar, Kharja, El-Kaddouri, Safri (Hdiouad 58), Boukhari (El-Yaacoubi 72), Y Hadji, Chamakh. *Sent off: Benaskar 79min.*

GROUP 5 – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
TUNISIA	10	6	3	1	25	9	21
Morocco	10	5	5	0	17	7	20
Guinea	10	5	2	3	15	10	17
Kenya	10	3	1	6	8	17	10
Botswana	10	3	0	7	10	18	9
Malawi	10	1	3	6	12	26	6

Group winners qualify for finals

ASIA

4.5 finals berths

2nd stage

Group A

GROUP A – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
SAUDI ARABIA	6	4	2	0	10	1	14
SOUTH KOREA	6	3	1	2	9	5	10
Uzbekistan	6	1	2	3	7	11	5
Kuwait	6	1	1	4	4	13	4

Group B

GROUP B – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
JAPAN	6	5	0	1	9	4	15
IRAN	6	4	1	1	7	3	13
Bahrain	6	1	1	4	4	7	4
North Korea	6	1	0	5	5	11	3

Group winners and runners-up qualify for finals. The two third-placed teams entered the Asian play-off

Asian play-off

**Ties were originally scheduled for September 3 and September 7. The first leg was played, in Tashkent, Uzbekistan winning 1-0. But FIFA ordered the game to be replayed because of an error by the referee*

Oct 8 - Tashkent
Uzbekistan 1 (Shatskikh 19)
Bahrain 1 (Yusuf 17)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 55,000. **Ref:** Busacca (Swi)
Uzbekistan: Safonov - Radkevich, Kasimov, Fedorov, Alikulov, Nikolaev, Kadadaze, Djeparov, Karpenko (Bikmoev 61), Soliev (Geinrikh 46), Shatskikh.
Bahrain: H Ali - Marzooq, Mohamed Adnan, Basheer, Yusuf, Isa, Baba (Farhan 84), Jalal (Abdul Rahman 62), Salmeen, M Hubail, H Ahmed (A Hubail 81).

Oct 12 - Manama
Bahrain 0
Uzbekistan 0
Att: 25,000. **Ref:** Poll (Eng)
Agg 1-1. Bahrain on away goals
Bahrain: H Ali - Marzooq, Mohamed Adnan, Basheer, Yusuf (A Hubail 82), Baba, Jalal (Abdul Rahman 63), Salmeen (Farhan 70), Ghuloom, M Hubail, H Ahmed.
Uzbekistan: Safonov - Radkevich, Kasimov, Fedorov, Alikulov, Nikolaev, Kadadaze, Djeparov, Karpenko (Bikmoev 63), Soliev (Kholmuradov 70), Geinrikh.

Bahrain meet Trinidad & Tobago, the fourth-placed CONCACAF team, in the Asia-CONCACAF play-off

CONCACAF

3.5 finals berths

3rd stage

Oct 8 - San Jose
Costa Rica 3 (Wanchope 34, Hernandez 60, 88)
United States 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 30,000. **Ref:** Archundia (Mex)
Costa Rica: Porras - Marin, G Martinez, J Drummond, L Gonzalez, M Solis (Sequiera 59), Centeno, Gomez, Wallace, Saborio (Hernandez 59), Wanchope (W Parks 76).
United States: Howard - Onyewu, Pope, Bocanegra (Martino 75), Albright (Quaranta 63), Mastroeni, Lewis, Beasley, Convey, Twellman, Ching.

Oct 8 - San Luis Potosi
Mexico 5 (Franco 20, Fonseca 48, 52, 62, 66)
Guatemala 2 (Ruiz 1, S Ponciano 54)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 30,000. **Ref:** Prendergast (Jam)
Mexico: Corona - Mendez, F Rodriguez, Osorio, Pineda (C Morales 54), Lopez, Torrado (Rojas 55), Lozano (Huiqui 58), L Perez, Franco, Fonseca.
Guatemala: Klee - E Ponciano, S Ponciano, Melgar, Sanabria, Rodriguez (Acevedo 55), Thompson, Giron, Romero (Garcia 78), Ramirez, Ruiz (G Cabrera 74).

Oct 8 - Panama City
Panama 0
Trinidad & Tobago 1 (S John 61)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 1,000. **Ref:** Navarro (Can)
Panama: Penedo - Guardia, R Torres, Moreno, Solanilla, Lombardo, Gomez, Brown (Olivares 85), Medina, Basile (Aguilar 67), G Torres (Jorge Dely Valdes 77).
Trinidad & Tobago: Jack - A John, M Andrews, Lawrence, Birchall, Spann, Latapy (Whitley 87), Edwards, S John, Theobold (Jones 61), Yorke.

Oct 12 - Guatemala City
Guatemala 3 (E Ponciano 2, Garcia 16, Ruiz 30)
Costa Rica 1 (Myrie 60)
HT: 3-0. **Att:** 15,000. **Ref:** Hall (USA)
Guatemala: Klee - S Ponciano, Melgar, E Ponciano, Sanabria, Giron, Romero, Thompson, Garcia (Ramirez 71), Acevedo (Pezzarossi 88), Ruiz (Plata 90).
Costa Rica: Mesen - Marin (Azofeifa 46), Badilla, Myrie, Umana, Sequeira, D Fonseca, Soto, Viquez (A Solis 77), Saborio (Diaz 66), W Parks.

Oct 12 - Port-of-Spain
Trinidad & Tobago 2 (S John 42, 61)
Mexico 1 (Lozano 38)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 23,000. **Ref:** Pineda (Hnd)
Trinidad & Tobago: Jack (Hislop 46) - M Andrews, C Gray, A John, Lawrence, Birchall, Whitley (Theobold 80), S John, Latapy, Edwards, Yorke.
Mexico: Corona - C Morales, H Sanchez, Huiqui (Mendez 67), F Rodriguez, Lozano, Lopez, Rojas, L Perez (A Medina 46), Franco (Juan P Rodriguez 74), Fonseca.

Oct 12 - Foxboro
United States 2 (Martino 51, Twellman 57)
Panama 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 9,192. **Ref:** Alcala (Mex)
United States: Howard - Spector, Marshall, Califf, Albright, Carroll, Martino (Clark 68), Dempsey, Quaranta, Twellman (Ching 74), Mapp (Ralston 58).
Panama: Penedo - Baloy, Moreno, Gomez, Solanilla, Guardia, Lombardo (G Torres 62), Jorge Dely Valdes, Brown (R Torres 62), Gallardo (Basile 62), Julio Dely Valdes.

3RD STAGE – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
UNITED STATES	10	7	1	2	16	6	22
MEXICO	10	7	1	2	22	9	22
COSTA RICA	10	5	1	4	15	14	16
Trinidad & Tob	10	4	1	5	10	15	13
Guatemala	10	3	2	5	16	18	11
Panama	10	0	2	8	4	21	2

Top three qualify for finals. Trinidad & Tobago meet Bahrain, the winners of the Asian play-off, in the Asia-CONCACAF play-off

EUROPE

14 finals berths (including hosts Germany, who qualify automatically)

Group 1

Oct 8 - Prague
Czech Republic 0
Holland 2 (Van der Vaart 32, Opdam 39)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 17,478. **Ref:** Sars (Fra)
Czech Republic: Cech - Grygera, Rozehnal, Ujfalusi, Jiranek (Smicer 46), Poborsky, Galasek, Rosicky, Polak (Heinz 57), Stajner (Jarolim 77), Baros.
Holland: Van der Sar - Kromkamp (De Jong 84), Boulahrouz (Vlaar 57), Opdam, Van Bronckhorst, Landzaat, Maduro, Van der Vaart, Kuijt, Van Nistelrooy, Robben (Van Persie 77).

Oct 8 - Helsinki
Finland 0
Romania 1 (Mutu pen 41)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 10,000. **Ref:** Genov (Bul)
Finland: Jaaskelainen - Nyman (Johansson 62), Kuivasto, Hyypia, Kallio, Lagerblom, Heikkinen, Tainio, Saarinen (Kopteff 77), Eremenko, Forssell (Sjolund 74).
Romania: Lobont - Contra (Badoi 54), Tamas, Iencsi, Rat, O Petre, D Munteanu, F Petre, Cocis, Mutu (Rosu 82), Mazilu (D Niculae 90).

Oct 12 - Andorra La Vella
Andorra 0
Armenia 3 (Sonejee og 39, Aram Hakopyan 52, Ara Hakopyan 62)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 250. **Ref:** Stokes (Ire)
Andorra: Koldo - Ayala, I Lima, A Lima, Escura, Riera (Jimenez 82), Ruiz, Sivera (Juli Sanchez 18), Sonejee, Bernaus, Vieira (Clemente 56).
Sent off: I Lima 43min.
Armenia: Kasparov - V Aleksanyan (Melkonyan 77), K Aleksanyan, Arzumanyan, K Dokhoyan, R Hachatryan, Tadevosyan, Melikyan, Mkhitaryan (Artur Voskanyan 82), Ara Hakopyan, Aram Hakopyan (Aram Voskanyan 80).

Oct 12 - Helsinki
Finland 0
Czech Republic 3 (Jun 6, Rosicky 50, Heinz 58)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 11,234. **Ref:** Mejuto Gonzalez (Spa)
Finland: Jaaskelainen - Hyypia, Kuivasto, Saarinen (Kopteff 12), Heikkinen, Kolkka, Lagerblom (Nyman 58), Tainio, Kallio, Sjolund (Forssell 63), Johansson.
Czech Republic: Cech - Grygera, Rozehnal, Ujfalusi, Mares, Poborsky, Galasek, Rosicky (Stajner 85), Smicer (Polak 61), Heinz, Jun (Kovac 73).

Oct 12 - Amsterdam
Holland 0
Macedonia 0
Att: 51,000. **Ref:** Farina (Ita)
Holland: Van der Sar - De Jong, Boulahrouz, Opdam, Van Bronckhorst, Landzaat (Sneijder 46), Maduro (Davids 64), Van der Vaart, Kuijt, Van Nistelrooy, Van Persie (Babel 86).
Macedonia: Milosevski - Noveski, G Popov (Sumulikoski 54), Sedloski, I Mitreski, Vasovski, Meglenski, Tasevski (Stojkov 71), Masev, Naumovski (Hristov 90), Pandev.

GROUP 1 – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
HOLLAND	12	10	2	0	27	3	32
Czech Republic	12	9	0	3	35	12	27
Romania	12	8	1	3	20	10	25
Finland	12	5	1	6	21	19	16
Macedonia	12	2	3	7	11	24	9
Armenia	12	2	1	9	9	25	7
Andorra	12	1	2	9	4	34	5

Group 2

Oct 8 - Copenhagen
Denmark 1 (Gravgaard 39)
Greece 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 42,099. **Ref:** De Bleeckere (Blg)
Denmark: Sorensen - Priske, Gravgaard, Per Nielsen, N Jensen, Rommedahl (Gronkjaer 71), Poulsen, Gravesen, C Jensen (Larsen 85), Jorgensen, Tomasson.
Greece: Nikopolidis - Seitaridis, Katsouranis, Kyrgiakos, Kapsis, Giannakopoulos, Zagorakis, Basinas (Salpingidis 46), Limberopoulos (Kafes 61), Karagounis, Vryzas (Gekas 76).

Oct 8 - Tbilisi
Georgia 0
Kazakhstan 0
Att: 10,000. **Ref:** Hyytia (Fin)
Georgia: Revishvili - Mjavanadze, Asatiani, Salukvadze, Kaladze, Ganugrava, Kankava, Mujiri, Kobiashvili, Demetradze, Ashvetia (Tsinamdzghvrishvili 86).
Kazakhstan: Loriya - Mukanov, Smakov, Irismetov, Azovsky, Travin, Nizovtsev, Zhumaskaliyev, Kuchma (Familtsev 50), Kenzhekhanov (Litvinenko 64), Larin (Khokhlov 51).

Oct 8 - Dnipropetrovsk
Ukraine 2 (Shevchenko 45, Rotan 86)
Albania 2 (Bogdani 75, 83)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 24,000. **Ref:** Verbist (Blg)
Ukraine: Shovkovskyi - Husiev, Fedorov, Rusol, Shevchuk, Tymoshchuk, Shelaiev, Rotan, Nazarenko (Vorobei 72), Voronin, Shevchenko (Bielik 59).
Albania: Lika - E Beqiri, Dallku, Cana, Hasi, Aliaj, Skela, Lala, Tare (Kapllani 71), Bogdani, Haxhi (Murati 84).

Oct 12 - Tirana
Albania 0
Turkey 1 (Tumer 57)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 13,200. **Ref:** Dauden Ibanez (Spa)
Albania: Lika - Hasi, Dallku (Jupi 63), E Beqiri, Cana, Lala, Skela, Haxhi (Murati 50), Aliaj, Tare (Kapllani 73), Bogdani.
Turkey: Volkan - Hamit Altintop, Alpay, Ibrahim Toraman, Umit Ozat, Okan Buruk (Nihat 46), Huseyin, Basturk (Emre Belozoglu 46), Selcuk, Tumer, Halil Altintop (Necati 90).

Oct 12 - Athens
Greece 1 (Papadopoulos 17)
Georgia 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 28,186. **Ref:** Trefoloni (Ita)
Greece: Nikopolidis - Seitaridis, Dellas (Anatolakis 64), Goumas, Kapsis, Katsouranis, Zagorakis (Kafes 54), Basinas, Mantzios (Vryzas 46), Salpingidis, Papadopoulos.
Georgia: Revishvili - Mjavanadze, Khizanishvili, Salukvadze (Tsinamdzghvrishvili 46), Kaladze, Ganugrava, Kankava, Mujiri, Kobiashvili, Gogua, Demetradze (Gotsiridze 86).

Oct 12 - Almaty
Kazakhstan 1 (Kuchma 86)
Denmark 2 (Gravgaard 46, Tomasson 49)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 8,050. **Ref:** Trivkovic (Cro)
Kazakhstan: Novikov - Avdeyev, Familtsev (Larin 56), Irismetov (Travin 66), Khokhlov, Kuchma, Litvinenko (Kenzhekhanov 51), Mukanov, Smakov, Zhumaskaliyev, Karpovits. *Sent off: Avdeyev 88min.*
Denmark: Sorensen (Christiansen 46) - Priske, Gravgaard, Per Nielsen, N Jensen (Helveg 88), Rommedahl (Kahlenberg 46), Poulsen, D Jensen, Jorgensen, Tomasson, Larsen.

GROUP 2 – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
UKRAINE	12	7	4	1	18	7	25
Turkey	12	6	5	1	23	9	23
Denmark	12	6	4	2	24	12	22
Greece	12	6	3	3	15	9	21
Albania	12	4	1	7	11	20	13
Georgia	12	2	4	6	14	25	10
Kazakhstan	12	0	1	11	6	29	1

Group 3

Oct 8 - Aveiro
Portugal 2 (Pauleta 48, Nuno Gomes 85)
Liechtenstein 1 (Fischer 32)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 29,000. **Ref:** Gilewski (Pol)
Portugal: Ricardo - Paulo Ferreira, Ricardo Carvalho, Jorge Andrade, Nuno Valente, Petit, Maniche (Tiago 70), Cristiano Ronaldo (Nuno Gomes 82), Figo, Simao (Hugo Viana 74), Pauleta.
Liechtenstein: Jehle - Telser, D Hasler, D'Elia, Michael Stocklasa, Martin Stocklasa, T Beck (D Frick 87), M Frick (Rohrer 51), R Buchel, F Burgmeier, Fischer (R Beck 55).

Oct 8 - Moscow
Russia 5 (Izmailov 7, Kerzhakov 18, Pavluchenko 69, Kirichenko 75, 90)
Luxembourg 1 (Reiter pen 52)
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 21,000. **Ref:** Tudor (Rom)
Russia: Akinfeev - A Berezutsky, Anyukov, Sennikov, V Berezutsky, Arshavin (Pavluchenko 61), Semshov, Gusev, Loskov, Izmailov (Semak 55), Kerzhakov (Kirichenko 68).
Luxembourg: Gillet - Hoffmann, Reiter, Schnell, A Leweck, Peters, Remy, Mutsch, C Leweck (Federspiel 76), Collette (Sabotic 77), Mannon (Da Luz 80).

Oct 8 - Bratislava
Slovakia 1 (Hlinka 72)
Estonia 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 12,837. **Ref:** Allaerts (Blg)
Slovakia: Contofalsky - Kratochvil, Hlinka, Skrtel, Had (Reiter 71), S Nemeth, Kisel, Zabavnik, Hodur (Sapara 80), Vittek, Sestak (Holosko 46).
Estonia: Kotenko - Piiroja, Stepanov, Jaager, Kruglov, Terehhov (Lindpere 73), Smirnov, Dmitrijev, Leetma (Rahn 86), Oper, Viikmae (Neemelo 37).

Oct 12 - Luxembourg
Luxembourg 0
Estonia 2 (Oper 7, 79)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 2,010. **Ref:** Dereli (Tur)
Luxembourg: Gillet - Kintziger, A Leweck, Hoffmann, Collette, Peters, Mutsch (Federspiel 73), Reiter, Remy, C Leweck (Da Luz 78), Mannon (Kitenge 57).
Estonia: Kotenko - Dmitrijev, Jaager, Piiroja, Klavan, Kruglov, Stepanov, Terehhov (Smirnov 63), Rahn (Reim 63), Oper, Neemelo.

Oct 12 - Porto
Portugal 3 (Pauleta 18, 20, Hugo Viana 84)
Latvia 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 36,860. **Ref:** Frojdfeldt (Swe)
Portugal: Quim - Miguel, Fernando Meira, Jorge Andrade, Caneira, Maniche, Tiago, Deco, Figo (Hugo Viana 78), Pauleta (Helder Postiga 57), Cristiano Ronaldo (Nuno Gomes 46).
Latvia: Kolinko - Isakovs, Zakresevskis, Stepanovs, Zirnis, Solonicins (Visnakovs 51), Astafjevs, Morozs, Rubins, Verpakovskis (Blanks 73), Rimkus (Kalnins 56).

Oct 12 - Bratislava
Slovakia 0
Russia 0
Att: 22,317. **Ref:** Rosetti (Ita)
Slovakia: Contofalsky - Kratochvil, Skrtel, Valachovic, Zabavnik, Hodur (Holosko 56), Karhan (Kisel 67), Hlinka, Had, Vittek, S Nemeth (Durica 82).
Russia: Akinfeev - A Berezutsky, Sennikov, Bilyaletdinov (Semak 58), V Berezutsky, Arshavin, Anyukov (Pavluchenko 83), Smertin, Loskov, Kerzhakov (Kirichenko 67), Izmailov.

GROUP 3 – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
PORTUGAL	12	9	3	0	35	5	30
Slovakia	12	6	5	1	24	8	23
Russia	12	6	5	1	23	12	23
Estonia	12	5	2	5	16	17	17
Latvia	12	4	3	5	18	21	15
Liechtenstein	12	2	2	8	13	23	8
Luxembourg	12	0	0	12	5	48	0

Group 4

Oct 8 - Nicosia
Cyprus 0
Republic of Ireland 1 (Elliott 6)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 13,546. **Ref:** Kassai (Hun)
Cyprus: N Panayiotou - Elia (Maragkos 74), Lambrou, Louka, Garpozis, C Michael (Krassas 31), Makrides, Charalambides, Aloneftis, Okkas (Yiasoumi 69), M Constantinou.
Rep Ireland: Given - Carr, Dunne, Cunningham, O'Shea, Finnan (Holland 46), Kavanagh, Kilbane, Duff (S Reid 60), Elliott, Robbie Keane (Connolly 88).

Oct 8 - Tel Aviv
Israel 2 (Benayoun 1, Zandberg 89)
Faroe Islands 1 (Samuelsen 90)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 31,857. **Ref:** Brugger (Aut)
Israel: Davidovich - Harazi, Ben Haim, Benado, Keisi, Badir, Suan (Zandberg 46), Nimni, Benayoun, Katan (Balili 73), Golan (Arbeitman 66).
Faroe Islands: Mikkelsen - Horg, O Johannesen, Jon R Jacobsen, Benjaminsen, Hojsted, Rogvi Jacobsen, Jorgensen, J B Hansen (Atli Danielsen 15), av Flotum (Frederiksberg 66), C Jacobsen (Samuelsen 80).

Oct 8 - Berne
Switzerland 1 (Magnin 79)
France 1 (Cisse 52)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 31,400. **Ref:** Hauge (Nor)
Switzerland: Zuberbuhler - Degen, Muller, Senderos, Magnin, Barnetta (Behrami 90), Vogel, Wicky (Lustrinelli 83), Cabanas, Frei, Vonlanthen (Gygax 60).
France: Coupet - Reveillere, Thuram, Boumsong, Gallas, Vieira, Makelele, Dhorasoo (Cisse 46), Zidane, Malouda (Govou 90), Wiltord.

Oct 12 - Saint-Denis
France 4 (Zidane 29, Wiltord 32, Dhorasoo 44, Giuly 84)
Cyprus 0
HT: 3-0. **Att:** 78,864. **Ref:** Stark (Ger)
France: Coupet - Sagnol, Thuram, Boumsong, Gallas, Vieira (Diarra 25), Dhorasoo, Wiltord (Giuly 59), Zidane, Govou (Jurietti 90), Cisse.
Cyprus: Morfis - Elia, Charalambides, Makrides (M Nicolaou 81), Krassas, Yiasoumi (Filaniotis 63), Garpozis (Maragkos 46), Lambrou, E Charalambous, Louka, Aloneftis.

Oct 12 - Dublin
Republic of Ireland 0
Switzerland 0
Att: 35,944. **Ref:** Merk (Ger)
Rep Ireland: Given - Carr, Dunne, Cunningham, Harte, A Reid (S Reid 80), O'Shea, Holland, Kilbane, Morrison (Doherty 87), Robbie Keane (Elliott 67).
Switzerland: Zuberbuhler - Degen, Muller, Senderos, Magnin, Barnetta (Gygax 88), Vogel, Cabanas, Wicky, Vonlanthen (Streller 53), Frei.

GROUP 4 – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
FRANCE	10	5	5	0	14	2	20
Switzerland	10	4	6	0	18	7	18
Israel	10	4	6	0	15	10	18
Rep Ireland	10	4	5	1	12	5	17
Cyprus	10	1	1	8	8	20	4
Faroe Islands	10	0	1	9	4	27	1

Group 5

Oct 8 - Palermo
Italy 1 (Zaccardo 78)
Slovenia 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 19,123. **Ref:** Poulat (Fra)
Italy: Peruzzi - Grosso, Nesta, Cannavaro, Zambrotta, Camoranesi, Gattuso, Pirlo (De Rossi 81), Totti, Gilardino (Zaccardo 60), Toni (Vieri 88).
Slovenia: B Mavric - Knavs, M Mavric, Cesar, Zlogar, Koren, Filekovic, Komac, Acimovic, Pokorn (Cimirotic 46), Rodic (Siljak 85).

Oct 8 - Oslo
Norway 1 (Rushfeldt 50)
Moldova 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 23,409. **Ref:** Bennett (Eng)
Norway: Myhre - Bergdolmo, Hagen, Hangeland, Riise, Gamst Pedersen, Haestad, Grindheim, M Johnsen (Solli 64), Rushfeldt (Braaten 83), Iversen (Helstad 90).
Moldova: Hmaruc - Olexici, Lascencov, Catinsus, Priganiuc, Bordian (Boret 68), Savinov, Covaliciuc, Ivanov (Gatcan 82), Dadu (Popovici 73), Rogaciov.

Oct 8 - Glasgow
Scotland 0
Belarus 1 (Kutuzov 6)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 51,105. **Ref:** Szabo (Hun)
Scotland: Gordon - G Alexander, Pressley, Weir, Murray, Dailly, Hartley, Fletcher, Ferguson, McCulloch (Maloney 46), K Miller.
Belarus: Khomutovsky - Korytko, Tarlovsky, Ostrovsky, Lavrik, Kalachev, Kovba, Kulchy, Bulyga (Sascheka 88), A Hleb, Kutuzov.

Oct 12 - Minsk
Belarus 0
Norway 1 (Helstad 70)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 13,222. **Ref:** Plautz (Aut)
Belarus: Khomutovsky - Omelyanchuk, Ostrovsky, Shtanyuk, Tarlovsky, Kulchy, Kovba (Kirilchik 58), Sascheka (Loshankov 64), Bulyga, Kalachev, Kutuzov.
Norway: Myhre - Hoiland, Hagen (Borgersen 81), Hangeland, Riise, Solli (Gashi 73), Stromstad, Grindheim, Gamst Pedersen, Rushfeldt (Helstad 46), Iversen.

Oct 12 - Lecce
Italy 2 (Vieri 71, Gilardino 85)
Moldova 1 (Gatcan 76)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 28,167. **Ref:** Benquerenca (Por)
Italy: De Sanctis - Zaccardo, Bonera (Blasi 46), Materazzi, Grosso (Zambrotta 63), Diana, De Rossi, Barone, Iaquinta (Gilardino 68), Vieri, Del Piero.
Moldova: Pascenco - Lascencov, Catinsus, Savinov, Priganiuc, Olexici, Gatcan, Boret, Covaliciuc, Rogaciov (Miterev 87), Dadu.

Oct 12 - Celje
Slovenia 0
Scotland 3 (Fletcher 4, McFadden 47, Hartley 84)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 9,100. **Ref:** Temmink (Hol)
Slovenia: Handanovic - M Mavric (Pecnik 24; Ilic 56), Knavs, Cesar, Acimovic, Koren, N Ceh, Zlogar, Komac, Rodic (Siljak 54), Cimirotic.
Scotland: Gordon - Pressley (G Caldwell 46), Weir, Webster, Dailly, Fletcher, Hartley, Quashie (S Caldwell 72), G Alexander, McFadden, K Miller (O'Connor 46).

GROUP 5 – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
ITALY	10	7	2	1	17	8	23
Norway	10	5	3	2	12	7	18
Scotland	10	3	4	3	9	7	13
Slovenia	10	3	3	4	10	13	12
Belarus	10	2	4	4	12	14	10
Moldova	10	1	2	7	5	16	5

Group 6

Oct 8 - Manchester
England 1 (Lampard pen 25)
Austria 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 64,822. **Ref:** Medina Cantalejo (Spa)
England: Robinson - Young, Terry, Campbell (Ferdinand 64), Carragher, Beckham, Gerrard, Lampard, J Cole (King 61), Crouch, Owen (Richardson 80). *Sent off: Beckham 59min.*
Austria: Macho - Dober, Scharner, Stranzl, Ibertsberger (Lasnik 79), Schopp (Kuljic 64), Aufhauser, Kiesenebner, Ivanschitz, Weissenberger (Sariyar 46), Linz.

Oct 8 - Belfast
Northern Ireland 2 (Gillespie 46, Davis 50)
Wales 3 (S Davies 27, C Robinson 38, Giggs 61)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 13,451. **Ref:** Bossen (Hol)
Northern Ireland: Taylor - Duff (Jones 73), Craigan, Murdock, Capaldi, Gillespie, Johnson, Davis, Elliott (Brunt 65), Healy, Quinn.
Wales: Jones - Delaney, J Collins (Duffy 51), Partridge, Ricketts (D Collins 87), S Davies, Fletcher, C Robinson, Giggs, Hartson, Earnshaw (Vaughan 76).

Oct 12 - Vienna
Austria 2 (Aufhauser 44, 90)
Northern Ireland 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 12,500. **Ref:** Briakos (Gre)
Austria: Macho - Dober (Ibertsberger 46), Scharner, Stranzl, Pogatetz, Schopp (Standfest 55), Kiesenebner, Aufhauser, Ivanschitz, Wallner (Gercaliu 78), Linz. *Sent off: Pogatetz 74min.*
Northern Ireland: Taylor - Baird, Duff, Craigan, Murdock, Gillespie, Johnson, Davis, Brunt (Elliott 77), Healy (Jones 70), Quinn (Feeney 57). *Sent off: Johnson 74min.*

Oct 12 - Manchester
England 2 (Owen 44, Lampard 80)
Poland 1 (Frankowski 45)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 65,467. **Ref:** Milton Nielsen (Den)
England: Robinson - Young, Ferdinand, Terry, Carragher, King, Wright-Phillips (Crouch 67), Lampard, J Cole (Smith 86), Rooney, Owen (Jenas 83).
Poland: Boruc - Baszczynski, Jop, J Bak, Michal Zewlakow, M Lewandowski, Smolarek (Krzynowek 46), Sobolewski (Radomski 79), Kosowski, Zurawski (Frankowski 38), Rasiak.

Oct 12 - Cardiff
Wales 2 (Giggs 3, 51)
Azerbaijan 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 32,628. **Ref:** Hansson (Swe)
Wales: Jones - Duffy, J Collins, Gabbidon, D Collins (Ricketts 53), Fletcher (Crofts 69), C Robinson, S Davies, Giggs (Cotterill 73), Vaughan, Hartson.
Azerbaijan: Kramarenko - Sadygov, Shukurov, Agaev (Bakhshiyev 80), Amirbayev, V Guliev, A Kerimov, Imamaliyev (Poladov 89), Tagizade, Muzika, Ismailov (S Aliev 69).

GROUP 6 – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
ENGLAND	10	8	1	1	17	5	25
POLAND	10	8	0	2	27	9	24
Austria	10	4	3	3	15	12	15
N Ireland	10	2	3	5	10	18	9
Wales	10	2	2	6	10	15	8
Azerbaijan	10	0	3	7	1	21	3

Group 7

Oct 8 - Brussels
Belgium 0
Spain 2 (Fernando Torres 56, 59)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 40,300. **Ref:** Michel (Slk)
Belgium: Proto - Vanden Borre (Deflandre 62), Hoefkens, Van Buyten, Deschacht, Vanderhaeghe, Buffel (Walasiak 62), Simons, Goor, M Mpenza (Pieroni 76), E Mpenza.
Spain: Casillas - Michel Salgado, Marchena, Puyol, Antonio Lopez, Joaquin (Villa 55), Xavi, Albelda, Vicente (Reyes 55), Raul, Fernando Torres (Baraja 70).

Oct 8 - Zenica
Bosnia-Herzegovina 3 (Bolic 48, 75, 85)
San Marino 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 8,500. **Ref:** Hamer (Lux)
Bosnia-Herzegovina: Tolja - Spahic, Music, Berberovic, Bajic, Salihamidzic (Hrgovic 69), Grlic, Grujic (Pelak 81), Bartolovic, Barbarez (Misimovic 77), Bolic.
San Marino: Ceccoli - Andreini, Delle Valle, Crescentini (Palazzi 71), Vannucci, L Nanni, Domeniconi (M Moretti 90), A Gasperoni, A Selva, Manuel Marani (P Montagna 80), Michele Marani.

Oct 8 - Vilnius
Lithuania 0
Serbia & Montenegro 2 (Kezman 43, Vukic 88)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 2,000. **Ref:** Wegereef (Hol)
Lithuania: Karcemarskas - Paulauskas (Laurisas 77), Dziaukstas, Skerla, Stankevicius, D Cesnauskis, Mikoliunas (Morinas 60), Preiksaitis, Savenas, Jankauskas, Danilevicius (Radzinevicius 88).
Serbia & Montenegro: Jevric - Gavrancic, Vidic, Krstajic, Lukovic, D Stankovic (Mladenovic 11), Nadj, Vukic, P Djordjevic, Kezman (Milosevic 89), Zigic (Ljuboja 56).

Oct 12 - Vilnius
Lithuania 1 (Deschacht og 38)
Belgium 1 (Geraerts 20)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 1,500. **Ref:** Riley (Eng)
Lithuania: Karcemarskas - Dziaukstas, Skerla, D Zutautas, Paulauskas, Stankevicius (Radzinevicius 90), Semberas, Morinas (Mikoliunas 81), Preiksaitis, Savenas, Danilevicius. *Sent off: Semberas 83min.*
Belgium: Proto - Deflandre, Simons, Deschacht, Hoefkens (Maertens 46), Vanderhaeghe, Geraerts (Vanden Borre 46), Goor, Walasiak, E Mpenza, M Mpenza.

Oct 12 - Serravalle
San Marino 0
Spain 6 (Antonio Lopez 1, Fernando Torres 10, pen 78, 89, Sergio Ramos 30, 38)
HT: 0-4. **Att:** 3,426. **Ref:** Meyer (Ger)
San Marino: F Gasperoni - Andreini (Palazzi 84), S Bacciocchi, L Nanni, Della Valle, Vannucci, A Gasperoni, Domeniconi, Manuel Marani (F Nanni 87), Michele Marani, P Montagna (Masi 71).
Spain: Casillas - Sergio Ramos, Juanito, Pablo, Antonio Lopez, De la Pena, Albelda, Raul (Mista 73), Reyes (Vicente 68), Fernando Torres, Villa (Baraja 58).

Oct 12 - Belgrade
Serbia & Montenegro 1 (Kezman 7)
Bosnia-Herzegovina 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 46,305. **Ref:** Vassaras (Gre)
Serbia & Montenegro: Jevric - Duljaj, Vidic, Gavrancic, Krstajic, Koroman, Nadj (Ilic 73), Vukic (Mladenovic 66), P Djordjevic, Kezman (Lukovic 87), Zigic. *Sent off: Vidic 85min.*
Bosnia-Herzegovina: Hasagic - Spahic, Berberovic, Milenkovic, Barbarez, Bajramovic, Music (Beslija 65), Grlic (Bartolovic 46), Jakirovic, Salihamidzic, Bolic (Misimovic 70).

GROUP 7 – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
SERBIA & M	10	6	4	0	16	1	22
Spain	10	5	5	0	19	3	20
Bosnia-Herz	10	4	4	2	12	9	16
Belgium	10	3	3	4	16	11	12
Lithuania	10	2	4	4	8	9	10
San Marino	10	0	0	10	2	40	0

Group 8

Oct 8 - Sofia
Bulgaria 2 (Berbatov 30, Lazarov 55)
Hungary 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 4,652. **Ref:** Delevic (Ser)
Bulgaria: Ivankov - Kishishev, V Iliev, Topuzakov, Yankov (Gargorov 68), Venkov, G Iliev, Stilian Petrov (Kamburov 73), M Petrov, Lazarov (Georgiev 61), Berbatov.
Hungary: Kiraly - Bodnar, Stark, Gyepes, Vanczak, Balog, Huszti, Buzsaky (Z Kovacs 77), Hajnal, Halmosi (Kerekes 46), Torghelle. *Sent off: Torghelle 90min.*

Oct 8 - Zagreb
Croatia 1 (Srna pen 56)
Sweden 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 34,015. **Ref:** De Santis (Ita)
Croatia: Butina - Tomas, R Kovac, Simunic, Srna, Tudor, Kranjcar, N Kovac, Babic, Klasnic (Bosnjak 70), Prso (Simic 90).
Sweden: Isaksson - Ostlund, Mellberg, Lucic, Edman, Linderoth (Wilhelmsson 66), Alexandersson, A Svensson (Kallstrom 71), Ljungberg, Larsson, M Jonson (Elmander 66).

Oct 12 - Budapest
Hungary 0
Croatia 0
Att: 6,979. **Ref:** Larsen (Den)
Hungary: Kiraly - Bodnar, Stark, Gyepes, Vanczak, Baranyos (Buzsaky 76), Boor, G Korsos, Hajnal, Huszti, Z Kovacs.
Croatia: Butina - Tomas, R Kovac, Babic, Tokic, Srna, Tudor, I Leko (J Leko 63), Vranjes, Klasnic (Bosnjak 63; Simic 89), Balaban.

Oct 12 - Valletta
Malta 1 (Barbara 78)
Bulgaria 1 (Yankov 67)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 2,844. **Ref:** Godulyan (Ukr)
Malta: Haber - Ciantar, Azzopardi (Zahra 64), Briffa, Said, Dimech, Wellman, Pullicino, Cohen (Grima 89), Woods (Barbara 71), Mallia.
Bulgaria: Kolev - Kishishev (Kamburov 85), V Iliev, Yankov, Topuzakov, Bojinov (Georgiev 63), Venkov, G Iliev, Gargorov, M Petrov (Lazarov 46), Berbatov.

Oct 12 - Stockholm
Sweden 3 (Ibrahimovic 29, Larsson 42, Kallstrom 90)
Iceland 1 (Arnason 25)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 33,716. **Ref:** Ivanov (Rus)
Sweden: Isaksson - Ostlund, Mellberg, Lucic, Edman, Linderoth, Wilhelmsson (Alexandersson 66), A Svensson (Kallstrom 74), Ljungberg, Ibrahimovic (Allback 74), Larsson.
Iceland: Arason - K O Sigurdsson, A Helgason, Solvi Jonsson, I Sigurdsson, Steinsson, B Gunnarsson (Vidarsson 84), Thorvaldsson (Hannes Sigurdsson 74), Gislason, Arnason (Einarsson 70), H Helguson.

GROUP 8 – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
CROATIA	10	7	3	0	21	5	24
SWEDEN	10	8	0	2	30	4	24
Bulgaria	10	4	3	3	17	17	15
Hungary	10	4	2	4	13	14	14
Iceland	10	1	1	8	14	27	4
Malta	10	0	3	7	4	32	3

Group winners and the two best runners-up qualify for finals. The other six runners-up have been paired in three two-leg play-off matches*

European play-offs

12.11.05 Norway-Czech Republic
16.11.05 Czech Republic-Norway

12.11.05 Spain-Slovakia
16.11.05 Slovakia-Spain

12.11.05 Switzerland-Turkey
16.11.05 Turkey-Switzerland

Play-off winners qualify for finals

**European group runners-up were ranked according to their results against the teams finishing 1st, 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th in their respective groups. See table below*

RUNNERS-UP RANKING TABLE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sweden	10	8	0	2	30	4	24
Poland	10	8	0	2	27	9	24
Czech Republic	10	7	0	3	23	11	21
Spain	10	5	5	0	19	3	20
Switzerland	10	4	6	0	18	7	18
Norway	10	5	3	2	12	7	18
Slovakia	10	4	5	1	17	7	17
Turkey	10	4	5	1	13	9	17

OCEANIA

0.5 finals berths

3rd stage

03.09.05 Australia-Solomon Islands..... 7-0
06.09.05 Solomon Islands-Australia..... 1-2
Australia 9-1 on agg

Australia meet Uruguay, the fifth-placed South American team, in the Oceania-South America play-off

SOUTH AMERICA

4.5 finals berths

Oct 8 - Barranquilla
Colombia 1 (Rey 24)
Chile 1 (R Rojas 63)
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Souza (Bra)
Colombia: Calero - Bedoya, I Cordoba, Palacio, Yepes, Pacheco (Patino 65), J Restrepo, Soto, Vargas (Ferreira 71), Angel, Rey (Arzuaga 67).
Chile: Bravo - Contreras (Navia 58), L Fuentes, R Perez, R Rojas, Villarroel, J Acuna, Jimenez (Mirosevic 58), Maldonado, Pizarro, Pinilla (Valdivia 80).

Oct 8 - Quito
Ecuador 0
Uruguay 0
Att: 37,270. **Ref:** Rezende (Bra)
Ecuador: Mora - De la Cruz, Ambrossi, I Hurtado, M Ayovi, G Espinoza, Mendez, E Tenorio, Valencia (Lara 55), Borja (Mina 77), Delgado.
Uruguay: Carini - Lopez, Lugano, Dario Rodriguez, G Rodriguez, Garcia, Pouso, Regueiro (Nunez 69), Varela, R Morales (D Silva 76), Recoba (Forlan 82).

Oct 8 - Maracaibo
Venezuela 0
Paraguay 1 (Haedo Valdez 65)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 13,272. **Ref:** Elizondo (Arg)
Venezuela: Angelucci - Cichero, H Gonzalez, Rey, Rojas, Arango, Paez, Urdaneta (A Gonzalez 70), L Vera, Maldonado (Moreno 74), Moran (Torrealba 55).
Paraguay: Gomez - J C Caceres, Caniza, Gamarra, Nunez, Acuna, Dos Santos (Montiel 77), Gavilan (Da Silva 88), Riveros, Haedo Valdez (Cuevas 85), Santa Cruz.

Oct 9 - Buenos Aires
Argentina 2 (Riquelme pen 80, Guadalupe og 90)
Peru 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 36,977. **Ref:** Torres (Par)
Argentina: Abbondanzieri - Ayala, Coloccini, G Milito, Sorin, Battaglia, L Gonzalez, Kily Gonzalez (Tevez 58), Riquelme (Santana 84), Crespo, Messi.
Peru: Butron - Galliquio (Ross 89), Guadalupe, Hidalgo, Rodriguez, Ciurlizza, J Garcia (Delgado 80), Jorge Soto, Torres, Farfan (Cominges 82), Guerrero. *Sent off: Butron 80min.*

Oct 9 - La Paz
Bolivia 1 (J A Castillo 50)
Brazil 1 (Juninho Pernambucano 25)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 22,725. **Ref:** Larrionda (Uru)
Bolivia: Arias - Hoyos (Pachi 46), Jauregui, Raldes, D Vaca, Angulo, Baldivieso, Cristaldo, Galindo, L Gutierrez (J A Castillo 46), Botero (L Paz 76).
Brazil: Julio Cesar - Cicinho, Luisao, Roque Junior, Gilberto (Gustavo Nery 58), Gilberto Silva, Renato (Alex 58), Juninho Pernambucano (Julio Baptista 79), Ricardinho, Robinho, Adriano.

Oct 12 - Belem
Brazil 3 (Adriano 28, Ronaldo 52, Roberto Carlos 63)
Venezuela 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 45,000. **Ref:** Baldassi (Arg)
Brazil: Dida - Cafu, Juan, Lucio, Roberto Carlos, Emerson, Ze Roberto (Juninho Pernambucano 67), Kaka, Ronaldinho (Alex 63), Ronaldo, Adriano (Robinho 63).
Venezuela: Dudamel - Cichero, Hernandez, Rey, Vielma, Arango, Jimenez, Maldonado (Torrealba 71), Paez (H Gonzalez 51), Urdaneta (Rojas 62), Vallenilla.

Oct 12 - Santiago
Chile 0
Ecuador 0
Ref: Elizondo (Arg)
Chile: Bravo - L Fuentes, R Perez, R Rojas, Villarroel (Mirosevic 59), Maldonado, Melendez, Pizarro, Valdivia (Suazo 54), Jimenez (Fernandez 69), Navia.
Ecuador: Villafuerte - Cortez (De la Cruz 58), Guagua, Lara (Ambrossi 69), Reasco, Castillo, G Espinoza, Saritama, E Tenorio, Borja (Mina 80), Caicedo.

Oct 12 - Asuncion
Paraguay 0
Colombia 1 (Rey 6)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 12,374. **Ref:** Rezende (Bra)
Paraguay: Villar - Caniza, J C Caceres, Manzur, Nunez (J D Caceres 60), Montiel, Acuna, Riveros, Dos Santos (Cardozo 75), Cabanas (Lopez 67), Cuevas.
Colombia: Calero - Perea, I Cordoba, Yepes, Passo, J Restrepo, Viafara, Soto, Moreno (Vargas 75), Angel (Vanegas 90), Rey (Renteria 78).

Oct 12 - Tacna
Peru 4 (Vassallo 11, Acasiete 38, Farfan 45, 82)
Bolivia 1 (L Gutierrez 66)
HT: 3-0. **Ref:** Sequeira (Arg)
Peru: Delgado - Acasiete, Galliquio (Mendoza 47), Guadalupe, Hidalgo, Jorge Soto, Ciurlizza, Cominges (J Garcia 83), Torres, Farfan, Vassallo (Ross 60). *Sent off: Ciurlizza 74min.*
Bolivia: Arias - Hoyos, Jauregui, Pachi, Raldes, D Vaca, Angulo, Baldivieso (L Gutierrez 48), Galindo (J Vaca 84), Botero (L Paz 61), J A Castillo. *Sent off: L Gutierrez 75min.*

Oct 12 - Montevideo
Uruguay 1 (Recoba 46)
Argentina 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 70,000. **Ref:** Souza (Bra)
Uruguay: Carini - Diogo, Lugano, Montero, Dario Rodriguez, Varela, Garcia, Recoba (Estoyanoff 70), Forlan (Lopez 89), R Morales, Zalayeta (Pouso 61).
Argentina: Abbondanzieri - Ayala, Samuel, Ponzio, Sorin, L Gonzalez (Messi 79), Battaglia, Kily Gonzalez (Aimar 61), Riquelme, Tevez, Crespo (C Delgado 61).

SOUTH AMERICA – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
BRAZIL	18	9	7	2	35	17	34
ARGENTINA	18	10	4	4	29	17	34
ECUADOR	18	8	4	6	23	19	28
PARAGUAY	18	8	4	6	23	23	28
Uruguay	18	6	7	5	23	28	25
Colombia	18	6	6	6	24	16	24
Chile	18	5	7	6	18	22	22
Venezuela	18	5	3	10	20	28	18
Peru	18	4	6	8	20	28	18
Bolivia	18	4	2	12	20	37	14

Top four qualify for finals. Uruguay meet Australia, the Oceania section winners, in the Oceania-South America play-off

INTERCONTINENTAL PLAY-OFFS

Asia-CONCACAF

12.11.05 Trinidad & Tobago-Bahrain
16.11.05 Bahrain-Trinidad & Tobago

Oceania-South America

12.11.05 Uruguay-Australia
16.11.05 Australia-Uruguay

Play-off winners qualify for finals

INTERNATIONALS

Friday, September 23
Sep 23 - friendly
United Arab Emirates 0
Benin 0

Sunday, September 25
Sep 25 - friendly
Zambia 2
DR Congo 2
HT: 1-0

Tuesday, September 27
Sep 27 - friendly
DR Congo 0
Zambia 0

Friday, September 30
Sep 30 - Linden - friendly
Guyana 3 (Abraham 10, Parks 60, Manning 81)
Dominica 0
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Lancaster (Guy)

Saturday, October 1
Oct 1 - Fort Lauderdale, USA - friendly
Guatemala 1 (Plata pen 43)
Jamaica 2 (Shelton 41, Crawford 70)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 6,000. **Ref:** Rutty (USA)
Guatemala: Motta (Klee 30; Molina 64) - Morales, Hernandez, Thompson, E Ponciano (Gomez 46), Plata (Pezzarossi 46), Giron, S Ponciano (Melgar 46), Acevedo (Romero 46), Davila, Sanabria. *Sent off: Sanabria 85min.*
Jamaica: S Sawyers - Breakenridge, Taylor, Moodie, Daley, G Reid, J Johnson, Stephenson, Dawkins, Shelton, Bennett.

Sunday, October 2
Oct 2 - Georgetown - friendly
Guyana 3 (McKinnon 19, 42, Codrington 85)
Dominica 0
HT: 2-0. **Ref:** Kia (Sur)

Friday, October 7
Oct 7 - Warsaw - friendly
Poland 3 (Krzynowek 25, Baszczynski 56, Smolarek 63)
Iceland 2 (K O Sigurdsson 15, H Sigurdsson 39)
HT: 1-2. **Att:** 7,500. **Ref:** Sukhina (Rus)
Poland: Boruc - Michal Zewlakow, Jop (Klos 86), J Bak, Rzasa (Baszczynski 46), Kosowski (Smolarek 46), Sobolewski (Mila 63), Kazmierczak (M Lewandowski 46), Krzynowek (Kaczmarek 76), Rasiak, Zurawski.
Iceland: Finnbogason (Larusson 88) - K O Sigurdsson, A Helgason (Eiriksson 76), Solvi Jonsson, I Sigurdsson, Steinsson, B Gunnarsson (Vidarsson 72), Einarsson (V Gunnarsson 74), Gislason, Arnason (Danielsson 84), Hannes Sigurdsson (T Gudmundsson 84).

Saturday, October 8
Oct 8 - Riga - friendly
Latvia 2 (Rimkus 67, Rubins 89)
Japan 2 (Takahara 5, Nakamura 52)
HT: 0-1
Latvia: Kolinko - Stepanovs, Astafjevs (Rimkus 46), Zakresevskis, Laizans (Kolesnicenko 84), Zirnis (Blanks 87), Isakovs, Solonicins (Zemlinskis 33; Visnakovs 46), Verpakovskis (Kalnins 63), Rubins, Morozs.
Japan: Doi - Komano, M Tanaka, Moniwa, K Nakata, Inamoto, H Nakata (Motoyama 86), Matsui (Alex 76), Nakamura (Tsuboi 76), Yanagisawa (Okubo 65), Takahara (T Suzuki 86).

Oct 8 - Istanbul - friendly
Turkey 2 (Halil Altintop 25, Nuri 89)
Germany 1 (Neuville 90)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 25,000. **Ref:** Messina (Ita)
Turkey: Volkan - Hamit Altintop, Alpay, Ibrahim Toraman, Umit Ozat (Ibrahim Akin 79), Selcuk (Nuri 86), Huseyin, Nihat (Serhat 84), Basturk (Serkan 46), Tumer (Necati 67), Halil Altintop (Ergun 46).
Germany: Kahn - Owomoyela, Sinkiewicz, Mertesacker, Jansen, Schneider, Frings (Deisler 46), Borowski (Hanke 73), Schweinsteiger (Hitzlsperger 82), Kuranyi (Neuville 46), Podolski.

Sunday, October 9

Oct 9 - London - friendly
Australia 5 (Bresciano 2, Thompson 27, Viduka 47, Aloisi 59, Griffiths 84)
Jamaica 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 6,570. **Ref:** Riley (Eng)
Australia: Kalac - T Vidmar (Skoko 53), Neill, Thwaite, Chipperfield, Bresciano (Cahill 79), Emerton (Grella 70), Wilkshire (Elrich 79), Culina, Thompson (Griffiths 70), Viduka (Aloisi 57).
Jamaica: S Sawyers - Stewart (Dawkins 64), Marshall, C Davis (Taylor 46), Finlayson (Breakenridge 53), J Johnson (Ralph 50), Gardner, Daley, Scarlett (G Reid 53), Fuller (Morrison 66), Shelton.

Tuesday, October 11

Oct 11 - friendly
Cambodia 0
Singapore 2
HT: 0-1

Oct 11 - Doha - friendly
Qatar 0
Iraq 0

Oct 11 - Al Ain - friendly
United Arab Emirates 2 (Matar 19, Jumaa 68)
Oman 2 (Saleh 60, 85)
HT: 1-0

Wednesday, October 12

Oct 12 - Hamburg - friendly
Germany 1 (Frings pen 51)
China 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 45,000. **Ref:** Cortez Batista (Por)
Germany: Kahn - Friedrich, Metzelder, Mertesacker (Huth 46), Schweinsteiger (Hitzlsperger 89), Frings, Deisler, Borowski, Schneider, Podolski (Kuranyi 52), Neuville (Owomoyela 90).
China: Li Leilei - Du Wei, Li Weifeng, Ji Mingyi, Sun Jihai (Wang Liang 83), Li Tie, Li Yan, Sun Xiang (Zheng Bin 90), Shao Jiayi (Cao Yang 59), Zheng Zhi (Xu Liang 80), Xie Hui (Dong Fangzhuo 46; Zhou Jie 90).

Oct 12 - Seoul - friendly
South Korea 2 (Cho Won-hee 1, Kim Jin-kyu 90)
Iran 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 62,000. **Ref:** Al-Ghamdi (Sau)
South Korea: Lee Woon-jae - Choi Jin-cheol (Baek Ji-hoon 46), Kim Young-chul, Kim Jin-kyu, Kim Dong-jin, Kim Do-heon (Yoo Kyoung-ryoul 67), Lee Ho (Kim Jung-woo 62), Cho Won-hee, Park Chu-young (Lee Chun-soo 65), Lee Dong-gook (Ahn Jung-hwan 82), Park Ji-sung.
Iran: Mirzapour - Nosrati (Kaebi 46), Golmohammadi, Rezaei, Zare, Alavi (Taymoorian 90), Nekounam, Navidkia (Borhani 70), Zandi, Karimi, Hashemian.

Oct 12 - Kiev - friendly
Ukraine 1 (Husin pen 89)
Japan 0
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Lajuks (Lat)
Ukraine: Startsev - Shelaiev (Radchenko 46), Yatsenko, Vaschuk, Nesmachnyi, Tymoshchuk (O Maxymov 65), Husin, Shyschenko (Rotan 46), Rykun (Nazarenko 46; Rusol 90), Vorobei, Bielik (Venhlynskyi 46).
Japan: Kawaguchi - Komano, Tsuboi (Okubo 90), Moniwa, Alex (Murai 68), K Nakata, Inamoto, H Nakata, Nakamura (Matsui 70), Takahara (Suzuki 46), Yanagisawa (Minowa 56). *Sent off: K Nakata 54min.*

WORLD UNDER-17 CHAMPIONSHIP

In Peru

Group A
Sep 16: China 1 Costa Rica 1; Peru 1 Ghana 1.
Sep 19: Ghana 1 Costa Rica 1; Peru 0 China 1.
Sep 22: Costa Rica 2 Peru 0; Ghana 1 China 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Costa Rica	3	1	2	0	4	2	5
China	3	1	2	0	3	2	5
Ghana	3	0	3	0	3	3	3
Peru	3	0	1	2	1	4	1

Group B
Sep 16: Uruguay 0 Mexico 2; Turkey 1 Australia 0.
Sep 19: Mexico 3 Australia 0; Uruguay 2 Turkey 3.
Sep 22: Australia 2 Uruguay 1; Mexico 1 Turkey 2.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Turkey	3	3	0	0	6	3	9
Mexico	3	2	0	1	6	2	6
Australia	3	1	0	2	2	5	3
Uruguay	3	0	0	3	3	7	0

Group C
Sep 17: Ivory Coast 3 Italy 4; North Korea 2 United States 3.
Sep 20: Italy 1 United States 3; Ivory Coast 0 North Korea 3.
Sep 23: United States 1 Ivory Coast 1; Italy 1 North Korea 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
United States	3	2	1	0	7	4	7
North Korea	3	1	1	1	6	4	4
Italy	3	1	1	1	6	7	4
Ivory Coast	3	0	1	2	4	8	1

Group D
Sep 17: Holland 5 Qatar 3; Brazil 1 Gambia 3.
Sep 20: Qatar 1 Gambia 3; Holland 1 Brazil 2.
Sep 23: Gambia 0 Holland 2; Qatar 0 Brazil 6.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Brazil	3	2	0	1	9	4	6
Holland	3	2	0	1	8	5	6
Gambia	3	2	0	1	6	4	6
Qatar	3	0	0	3	4	14	0

Top two from each group qualified for quarter-finals

Quarter-finals
Sep 25: Costa Rica 1 Mexico 3 (aet); Turkey 5 China 1.
Sep 26: United States 0 Holland 2; Brazil 3 North Korea 1 (aet).

Semi-finals
Sep 29 - Chiclayo
Mexico 4 (Villaluz 33, 61, Moreno 50, Guzman 90)
Holland 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 16,800. **Ref:** Shield (Aus)

Sep 29 - Trujillo
Turkey 3 (Caner 47, Tevfik 70, Nuri 76)
Brazil 4 (Celso 1, Anderson 26, Marcelo 32, Igor 90)
HT: 0-3. **Att:** 19,000. **Ref:** De Bleeckere (Blg)
Sent off: Erkan 45min, Serdar 90min, Ozgurcan 90min (all Turkey)

Third-place play-off
Oct 2 - Lima
Holland 2 (Goossens 13, 88)
Turkey 1 (Nuri 90)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 35,000. **Ref:** Larrionda (Uru)
Sent off: Caner (Turkey) 90min

Final
Oct 2 - Lima
Mexico 3 (Vela 31, Esparza 33, Guzman 86)
Brazil 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 40,000. **Ref:** De Bleeckere (Blg)
Mexico: Arias - Araujo, Moreno (Valverde 75), Esparza, Valdez, Sanchez, Hernandez, Dos Santos (Guzman 79), Aldrete, Villaluz, Vela (Silva 90).
Brazil: Felipe - Leyrielton, Roberto, Marcelo, Sidnei, Denilson (Mezenga 64), Simoes (Jose Claudio 82), Celso, Anderson (Mauricio 16), Igor, Ramon. *Sent off: Marcelo 90min.*

EUROPE

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Group A

Sep 27
Juventus (Ita) 3 (Trezeguet 27, Mutu 82, Ibrahimovic 85)
Rapid Wien (Aut) 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 11,156. **Ref:** Hansson (Swe)
Juventus: Abbiati - Pessotto, Thuram, Cannavaro, Zambrotta, Camoranesi (Mutu 65), Emerson, Giannichedda (Blasi 83), Nedved, Trezeguet (Del Piero 59), Ibrahimovic.
Rapid: Payer - Dober (Martinez 76), Valachovic, Bejbl, Adamski, Hofmann, Korsos, Hlinka, Ivanschitz, Kincl, Akagunduz (Lawaree 53).

Sep 27
Bayern Munich (Ger) 1 (Demichelis 32)
Club Brugge (Blg) 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 65,527. **Ref:** Ovrebo (Nor)
Bayern: Kahn - Sagnol, Lucio, Ismael, Lizarazu (Scholl 52), Schweinsteiger, Demichelis, Ze Roberto, Ballack (Jeremies 83), Makaay, Guerrero (Santa Cruz 72).
Club Brugge: Butina - De Cock, Maertens, Vandelannoite, Dufer, Vermant, Blondel, Verheyen (Yulu-Matondo 75), Englebert (Roelandts 85), Leko (Portillo 68), Balaban.

Oct 18
Bayern Munich 2 (Deisler 32, Demichelis 39)
Juventus 1 (Ibrahimovic 90)
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 66,000. **Ref:** Vassaras (Gre)
Bayern: Kahn - Sagnol, Lucio, Ismael, Lizarazu (Schweinsteiger 30), Deisler, Demichelis, Ballack, Ze Roberto, Makaay, Santa Cruz (Scholl 88).
Juventus: Abbiati - Blasi (Chiellini 46), Thuram, Cannavaro, Zambrotta, Camoranesi (Del Piero 46), Giannichedda, Emerson, Nedved, Ibrahimovic, Trezeguet (Mutu 66).

Oct 18
Rapid Wien 0
Club Brugge 1 (Balaban 75)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 45,000. **Ref:** Dougal (Sco)
Rapid: Payer - Dober (Martin Hiden 54), Valachovic, Bejbl (Martinez 73), Adamski, Hofmann, Korsos, Hlinka, Ivanschitz, Kincl, Lawaree (Akagunduz 73).
Club Brugge: Butina - Vanaudenaerde, Spilar, Maertens (Englebert 70), Blondel, Clement, Vermant, Leko, Dufer (Roelandts 90), Portillo (Verheyen 70), Balaban.

GROUP A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bayern Munich	3	3	0	0	4	1	9
Juventus	3	2	0	1	6	3	6
Club Brugge	3	1	0	2	2	3	3
Rapid Wien	3	0	0	3	0	5	0

Sep 14	Club Brugge-Juventus	1-2
Sep 14	Rapid Wien-Bayern Munich	0-1
Sep 27	Juventus-Rapid Wien	3-0
Sep 27	Bayern Munich-Club Brugge	1-0
Oct 18	Bayern Munich-Juventus	2-1
Oct 18	Rapid Wien-Club Brugge	0-1
Nov 2	Juventus-Bayern Munich	
Nov 2	Club Brugge-Rapid Wien	
Nov 22	Bayern Munich-Rapid Wien	
Nov 22	Juventus-Club Brugge	
Dec 7	Rapid Wien-Juventus	
Dec 7	Club Brugge-Bayern Munich	

Group B

Sep 27
Thun (Swi) 1 (Hodzic 89)
Sparta Prague (Cze) 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 30,783. **Ref:** Layec (Fra)
Thun: Jakupovic - Orman (Gerber 46), Milicevic, Deumi, Goncalves, Hodzic, Aegerter, Leandro, Adriano Pimenta (Gelson 83), Ferreira, Lustrinelli (Sen 79).
Sparta: Blazek - Pospech, Petras, Petrous, Kadlec, Kisel, Sivok, Hasek, Zelenka (Dosek 84), Polacek, Slepicka (Herzan 60).

Sep 27
Ajax (Hol) 1 (Rosenberg 71)
Arsenal (Eng) 2 (Ljungberg 2, Pires pen 69)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 50,000. **Ref:** Medina Cantalejo (Spa)
Ajax: Vonk - De Jong, Grygera, Vermaelen, Emanuelson (Juanfran 85), Galasek, Pienaar, Lindenbergh, Babel, Haristeas (Rosenberg 57), Boukhari (Manucharyan 70).
Arsenal: Almunia - Lauren, Toure, Campbell, Cole, Hleb (Cygan 90), Fabregas, Flamini, Pires (Clichy 88), Ljungberg, Reyes (Owusu-Abeyie 81).

Oct 18
Ajax 2 (Anastasiou 36, 55)
Thun 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 50,000. **Ref:** Rosetti (Ita)
Ajax: Stekelenburg - Trabelsi, Grygera, Maduro, Emanuelson, De Jong, Galasek, Sneijder, Pienaar (Boukhari 84), Anastasiou (Babel 82), Rosales (Heitinga 90).
Thun: Jakupovic - Orman, Deumi, Milicevic, Goncalves, Leandro, Aegerter, Ferreira, Adriano Pimenta (Sen 74), Gelson (Duruz 85), Lustrinelli (Omar 85).

Oct 18
Sparta Prague 0
Arsenal 2 (Henry 21, 74)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 12,528. **Ref:** Stark (Ger)
Sparta: Blazek - Pergl (Matusovic 70), Petrous, Lukas, Kadlec, Petras, Pospech, Polacek, Zelenka, Kisel, Slepicka (Dosek 77).
Arsenal: Lehmann - Lauren, Toure, Cygan, Clichy, Fabregas (Owusu-Abeyie 89), Flamini, Gilberto Silva, Pires, Van Persie (Eboue 72), Reyes (Henry 15).

GROUP B

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Arsenal	3	3	0	0	6	2	9
Ajax	3	1	1	1	4	3	4
Thun	3	1	0	2	2	4	3
Sparta Prague	3	0	1	2	1	4	1

Sep 14	Arsenal-Thun	2-1
Sep 14	Sparta Prague-Ajax	1-1
Sep 27	Thun-Sparta Prague	1-0
Sep 27	Ajax-Arsenal	1-2
Oct 18	Ajax-Thun	2-0
Oct 18	Sparta Prague-Arsenal	0-2
Nov 2	Thun-Ajax	
Nov 2	Arsenal-Sparta Prague	
Nov 22	Ajax-Sparta Prague	
Nov 22	Thun-Arsenal	
Dec 7	Sparta Prague-Thun	
Dec 7	Arsenal-Ajax	

Group C

Sep 27
Barcelona (Spa) 4 (Ronaldinho 13, 32, pen 90, Deco 41)
Udinese (Ita) 1 (Felipe 24)
HT: 3-1. **Att:** 74,000. **Ref:** Bennett (Eng)
Barcelona: Valdes - Belletti, Puyol, Oleguer, Van Bronckhorst, Van Bommel (Iniesta 62), Xavi, Deco, Messi (Ezquerro 70), Eto'o (Larsson 81), Ronaldinho.
Udinese: De Sanctis - Bertotto, Natali (Juarez 34), Felipe, Zenoni, Vidigal, Obodo, Muntari (Di Michele 73), Candela, Barreto, Di Natale (Mauri 52).
Sent off: Vidigal 49min.

Sep 27
Panathinaikos (Gre) 2 (Gonzalez pen 6, Mantzios 8)
Werder Bremen (Ger) 1 (Klose 41)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 35,000. **Ref:** Poulat (Fra)
Panathinaikos: Galinovic - Vintra, Morris, Goumas (Kotsios 43), Darlas, Nilsson, Flavio Conceicao, Gonzalez, Seric, Torghelle (Tziolis 58), Mantzios (Gekas 72).
Werder: Reinke - Owomoyela, Andreasen, Naldo, Schulz (Haedo Valdez 75), Frings, Baumann (Hunt 63), Micoud, Borowski, Klose, Klasnic. *Sent off: Klasnic 86min.*

Oct 18
Panathinaikos 0
Barcelona 0
Att: 65,000. **Ref:** De Bleeckere (Blg)
Panathinaikos: Galinovic - Vintra, Biscan, Morris, Darlas, Nilsson, Flavio Conceicao, Gonzalez (Papadopoulos 76), Seric (Wooter 88), Mantzios, Torghelle (Leontiou 59).
Barcelona: Valdes - Belletti, Puyol, Marquez, Van Bronckhorst, Xavi (Iniesta 75), Van Bommel (Motta 56), Deco, Larsson (Messi 67), Ronaldinho, Eto'o.

Oct 18
Udinese 1 (Di Natale 86)
Werder Bremen 1 (Felipe og 63)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 25,000. **Ref:** Temmink (Hol)
Udinese: De Sanctis - Bertotto, Sensini, Felipe, Zenoni (Mauri 76), Pinzi (Di Natale 76), Obodo, Muntari, Candela, Di Michele (Barreto 58), Iaquinta.
Werder: Reinke - Owomoyela, Andreasen, Naldo, Schulz, Frings, Baumann, Borowski, Micoud, Haedo Valdez (Hunt 84), Klose.

GROUP C

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Barcelona	3	2	1	0	6	1	7
Udinese	3	1	1	1	5	5	4
Panathinaikos	3	1	1	1	2	4	4
Werder Bremen	3	0	1	2	2	5	1

Sep 14 Udinese-Panathinaikos 3-0
Sep 14 Werder Bremen-Barcelona 0-2
Sep 27 Barcelona-Udinese 4-1
Sep 27 Panathinaikos-Werder 2-1
Oct 18 Panathinaikos-Barcelona 0-0
Oct 18 Udinese-Werder Bremen 1-1
Nov 2 Barcelona-Panathinaikos
Nov 2 Werder Bremen-Udinese
Nov 22 Panathinaikos-Udinese
Nov 22 Barcelona-Werder Bremen
Dec 7 Udinese-Barcelona
Dec 7 Werder Bremen-Panathinaikos

Group D

Sep 27
Lille (Fra) 0
Villarreal (Spa) 0
Att: 35,153. **Ref:** Frojdfeldt (Swe)
Lille: Sylva - Lichtsteiner, Plestan, Schmitz, Tafforeau, Debuchy, Makoun, Bodmer (Dumont 46), Acimovic (Dernis 84), Odemwingie, Moussilou (Fauvergue 73).
Villarreal: Viera - Kromkamp, Pena, Quique Alvarez (Rodriguez 46), Arruabarrena, Tacchinardi, Josico, Sorin (Marcos Senna 46), Riquelme, Forlan (Guayre 84), Figueroa.

Sep 27
Manchester United (Eng) 2 (Giggs 39, Van Nistelrooy 85)
Benfica (Por) 1 (Simao 59)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 66,112. **Ref:** Michel (Slk)
Man Utd: Van der Sar - Bardsley, Ferdinand, O'Shea, Richardson, Fletcher, Smith, Cristiano Ronaldo, Scholes, Giggs, Van Nistelrooy.
Benfica: Moreira - Nelson, Luisao, Ricardo Rocha, Leo, Petit, Manuel Fernandes (Geovanni 86), Beto (Mantorras 86), Miccoli (Joao Pereira 80), Simao, Nuno Gomes.

Oct 18
Manchester United 0
Lille 0
Att: 60,626. **Ref:** Farina (Ita)
Man Utd: Van der Sar - Bardsley, Ferdinand, Silvestre, O'Shea, Cristiano Ronaldo, Fletcher, Smith, Giggs (Park 84), Scholes, Van Nistelrooy. *Sent off: Scholes 63min.*
Lille: Sylva - Chalme, Tavlaridis, Schmitz, Vitakic, Bodmer, Makoun, Debuchy (Keita 84), Acimovic (Dernis 60), Tafforeau, Odemwingie (Moussilou 73).

Oct 18
Villarreal 1 (Riquelme pen 72)
Benfica 1 (Manuel Fernandes 76)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 24,500. **Ref:** Meyer (Ger)
Villarreal: Viera - Kromkamp, Cesar Arzo, Gonzalo, Arruabarrena (Josico 46), Santi Cazorla, Tacchinardi (Roger 84), Riquelme, Sorin, Jose Mari (Figueroa 79), Forlan.
Benfica: Quim (Rui Nereu 28) - Nelson, Luisao, Anderson, Ricardo Rocha, Petit, Manuel Fernandes, Geovanni (Beto 89), Karagounis (Karyaka 65), Simao, Nuno Gomes.

GROUP D

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Man Utd	3	1	2	0	2	1	5
Benfica	3	1	1	1	3	3	4
Villarreal	3	0	3	0	1	1	3
Lille	3	0	2	1	0	1	2

Sep 14 Benfica-Lille 1-0
Sep 14 Villarreal-Manchester United.... 0-0
Sep 27 Lille-Villarreal 0-0
Sep 27 Manchester United-Benfica..... 2-1
Oct 18 Manchester United-Lille 0-0
Oct 18 Villarreal-Benfica..... 1-1
Nov 2 Lille-Manchester United
Nov 2 Benfica-Villarreal
Nov 22 Manchester United-Villarreal
Nov 22 Lille-Benfica
Dec 7 Villarreal-Lille
Dec 7 Benfica-Manchester United

Group E

Sep 28
Schalke (Ger) 2 (Larsen 3, Altintop 70)
Milan (Ita) 2 (Seedorf 1, Shevchenko 59)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 53,425. **Ref:** Larsen (Den)
Schalke: Rost - Rafinha, Bordon, Rodriguez, Krstajic, Ernst (Altintop 68), Poulsen (Bajramovic 85), Kobiashvili, Lincoln, Kuranyi (Sand 74), Larsen.
Milan: Dida - Cafu (Stam 76), Nesta, Maldini, Kaladze, Gattuso, Pirlo, Seedorf, Kaka (Rui Costa 74), Gilardino (Vieri 70), Shevchenko.

Sep 28
Fenerbahce (Tur) 3 (Alex pen 41, 68, Appiah 90)
PSV Eindhoven (Hol) 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 49,500. **Ref:** Mejuto Gonzalez (Spa)
Fenerbahce: Volkan - Serkan, Onder, Fabio Luciano, Umit, Selcuk, Marco Aurelio, Appiah, Nobre (Mehmet 90), Alex (Kemal 90), Anelka.
PSV: Gomes - Ooijer, Alex, Addo, Lucius (Ferreyra 54), Simons, Cocu, Afellay, Farfan, Vennegoor of Hesselink, Beasley. *Sent off: Vennegoor of Hesselink 45min.*

Oct 19
Fenerbahce 3 (Fabio Luciano 14, Nobre 73, Appiah 79)
Schalke 3 (Lincoln 59, 62, Kuranyi 77)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 50,000. **Ref:** Hamer (Lux)
Fenerbahce: Volkan - Serkan, Onder, Fabio Luciano, Umit, Appiah, Marco Aurelio (Tuncay 67), Selcuk, Alex, Nobre, Anelka. *Sent off: Alex 88min.*
Schalke: Rost - Altintop, Bordon, Krstajic, Kobiashvili, Rafinha, Poulsen, Rodriguez, Lincoln, Sand (Kuranyi 46), Larsen.

Oct 19
Milan 0
PSV Eindhoven 0
Att: 39,298. **Ref:** Plautz (Aut)
Milan: Dida - Cafu, Stam, Maldini, Kaladze, Gattuso, Pirlo, Seedorf (Serginho 75), Kaka, Shevchenko (Inzaghi 49), Vieri.
PSV: Gomes - Reiziger, Alex, Ooijer, Lamey, Afellay, Simons, Cocu, Farfan, Beasley, Robert (Aissati 63).

GROUP E

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Milan	3	1	2	0	5	3	5
Fenerbahce	3	1	1	1	7	6	4
PSV	3	1	1	1	1	3	4
Schalke	3	0	2	1	5	6	2

Sep 13 Milan-Fenerbahce 3-1
Sep 13 PSV-Schalke 1-0
Sep 28 Schalke-Milan 2-2
Sep 28 Fenerbahce-PSV..... 3-0
Oct 19 Fenerbahce-Schalke 3-3
Oct 19 Milan-PSV..... 0-0
Nov 1 Schalke-Fenerbahce
Nov 1 PSV-Milan
Nov 23 Fenerbahce-Milan
Nov 23 Schalke-PSV
Dec 6 Milan-Schalke
Dec 6 PSV-Fenerbahce

Group F

Sep 28
Rosenborg (Nor) 0
Lyon (Fra) 1 (Cris 45)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 20,620. **Ref:** Baskakov (Rus)
Rosenborg: E Johnsen - Strand (Basma 66), Kvarme, Riseth, Dorsin, Skjelbred, Berg, Solli, Braaten, Helstad (F Johnsen 68), Storflor (Odegaard 59).
Lyon: Coupet - Reveillere, Cris, Cacapa, Berthod, Govou (Wiltord 89), Tiago, Diarra, Juninho, Malouda, Carew (Fred 90).

Sep 28
Real Madrid (Spa) 2 (Raul 9, Soldado 87)
Olympiakos (Gre) 1 (Kafes 47)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 62,473. **Ref:** Merk (Ger)
Real Madrid: Casillas - Michel Salgado (Diogo 80), Ivan Helguera, Sergio Ramos, Roberto Carlos, Beckham, Pablo Garcia (Gravesen 85), Guti, Robinho, Julio Baptista (Soldado 79), Raul. *Sent off: Sergio Ramos 90min.*
Olympiakos: Nikopolidis - Mavrogenidis (Kapsis 40), Anatolakis, Kostoulas, Georgatos, Kafes, Toure, Stoltidis (Babangida 90), Rivaldo, Constantinou (Okkas 85), Djordjevic.

Oct 19
Real Madrid 4 (Woodgate 48, Raul 52, Ivan Helguera 68, Beckham 82)
Rosenborg 1 (Strand 40)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 69,053. **Ref:** Bennett (Eng)
Real Madrid: Casillas - Diogo, Woodgate (Mejia 85), Ivan Helguera, Roberto Carlos, Pablo Garcia, Beckham, Robinho, Zidane (Gravesen 70), Raul, Julio Baptista (Guti 46).
Rosenborg: E Johnsen - Basma, Kvarme, Riseth, Dorsin, Braaten, Strand (Tettey 46), Skjelbred (Winsnes 75), Solli, Storflor, Helstad (F Johnsen 63).

Oct 19
Lyon 2 (Juninho 4, Govou 89)
Olympiakos 1 (Kafes 84)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 38,053. **Ref:** Poll (Eng)
Lyon: Coupet - Reveillere, Cris, Cacapa, Abidal, Govou (Clement 90), Tiago, Diarra, Juninho, Malouda (Wiltord 75), Fred (Carew 70).
Olympiakos: Nikopolidis - Pantos, Kapsis, Anatolakis (Babangida 90), Kostoulas, Erol, Toure, Stoltidis (Constantinou 86), Okkas, Djordjevic, Kafes.

GROUP F

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Lyon	3	3	0	0	6	1	9
Real Madrid	3	2	0	1	6	5	6
Rosenborg	3	1	0	2	4	6	3
Olympiakos	3	0	0	3	3	7	0

Sep 13 Lyon-Real Madrid 3-0
Sep 13 Olympiakos-Rosenborg 1-3
Sep 28 Rosenborg-Lyon 0-1
Sep 28 Real Madrid-Olympiakos 2-1
Oct 19 Real Madrid-Rosenborg..... 4-1
Oct 19 Lyon-Olympiakos..... 2-1
Nov 1 Rosenborg-Real Madrid
Nov 1 Olympiakos-Lyon
Nov 23 Real Madrid-Lyon
Nov 23 Rosenborg-Olympiakos
Dec 6 Lyon-Rosenborg
Dec 6 Olympiakos-Real Madrid

Group G

Sep 28
Liverpool (Eng) 0
Chelsea (Eng) 0
Att: 42,743. **Ref:** De Santis (Ita)
Liverpool: Reina - Finnan, Carragher, Hyypia, Traore, Hamann, Xabi Alonso, Gerrard, Luis Garcia, Cisse (Sinama-Pongolle 77), Crouch.
Chelsea: Cech - Paulo Ferreira, Ricardo Carvalho, Terry, Gallas, Makelele, Essien, Lampard, Duff (Crespo 74), Robben (Wright-Phillips 64), Drogba (Huth 90).

Sep 28
Anderlecht (Blg) 0
Betis (Spa) 1 (Ricardo Oliveira 69)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 21,278. **Ref:** Rosetti (Ita)
Anderlecht: Proto - Vanden Borre, De Man, Tihinen (Serhat 80), Deschacht, Vanderhaeghe (Baseggio 85), Wilhelmsson, Zetterberg, Goor, Mpenza, Jestrovic.
Betis: Doblas - Melli, Juanito, Rivas (Nano 72), Oscar Lopez, Varela, Rivera, Miguel Angel, Xisco (Fernando 76), Joaquin (Marcos Assuncao 90), Ricardo Oliveira.

Oct 19
Anderlecht 0
Liverpool 1 (Cisse 20)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 20,000. **Ref:** Busacca (Swi)
Anderlecht: Proto - Vanden Borre, Tihinen (Traore 50), De Man, Deschacht (Serhat 75), Wilhelmsson, Vanderhaeghe (Baseggio 61), Zetterberg, Goor, Jestrovic, Mpenza.
Liverpool: Reina - Josemi, Carragher, Hyypia, Traore, Sissoko (Zenden 82), Xabi Alonso, Hamann, Riise (Warnock 88), Luis Garcia, Cisse (Kewell 75).

Oct 19
Chelsea 4 (Drogba 24, Ricardo Carvalho 44, J Cole 59, Crespo 64)
Betis 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 36,457. **Ref:** Hauge (Nor)
Chelsea: Cudicini - Gallas, Ricardo Carvalho, Terry, Del Horno, Makelele (Diarra 75), Essien, Lampard, Wright-Phillips (Gudjohnsen 66), J Cole, Drogba (Crespo 46).
Betis: Doblas - Melli, Juanito, Rivas, Oscar Lopez (Xisco 46), Rivera, Miguel Angel (Marcos Assuncao 55), Varela, Joaquin, Edu, Ricardo Oliveira.

GROUP G

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Chelsea	3	2	1	0	5	0	7
Liverpool	3	2	1	0	3	1	7
Betis	3	1	0	2	2	6	3
Anderlecht	3	0	0	3	0	3	0

Sep 13 Betis-Liverpool 1-2
Sep 13 Chelsea-Anderlecht 1-0
Sep 28 Liverpool-Chelsea..... 0-0
Sep 28 Anderlecht-Betis..... 0-1
Oct 19 Anderlecht-Liverpool 0-1
Oct 19 Chelsea-Betis 4-0
Nov 1 Liverpool-Anderlecht
Nov 1 Betis-Chelsea
Nov 23 Anderlecht-Chelsea
Nov 23 Liverpool-Betis
Dec 6 Chelsea-Liverpool
Dec 6 Betis-Anderlecht

Group H

Sep 28
Internazionale (Ita) 1 (Pizarro 49)
Rangers (Sco) 0
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Vassaras (Gre)
Match played behind closed doors
Inter: Julio Cesar - Cordoba, Samuel, Materazzi, Wome, Figo (Ze Maria 75), Pizarro, Cambiasso, Solari (Kily Gonzalez 84), Martins (Recoba 60), Cruz.
Rangers: Waterreus - Ricksen, Rodriguez, Kyrgiakos, Bernard, Namouchi (Thompson 89), Ferguson, Murray (Nieto 84), Lovenkrands, Buffel (Jeffers 77), Prso.

Sep 28
FC Porto (Por) 2 (Gonzalez 32, Diego 39)
Artmedia Bratislava (Slk) 3 (Petras 45, Kozak 54, Borbely 74)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 38,000. **Ref:** Busacca (Swi)
Porto: Vitor Baia - Bosingwa, Ricardo Costa (Alan 76), Bruno Alves, Cesar Peixoto, Ibson, Diego (Hugo Almeida 76), Gonzalez, Ricardo Quaresma, McCarthy, Jorginho.
Artmedia: Cobej - Burak (Halenar 46), Borbely, Durica, Urbanek, Vascak, Debnar, Kozak, Fodrek, Petras (Stano 79), Hartig (Obzera 84).

Oct 19
FC Porto 2 (Materazzi og 22, McCarthy 35)
Internazionale 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 38,418. **Ref:** Ivanov (Rus)
Porto: Vitor Baia - Bosingwa, Pedro Emanuel, Pepe, Cech, Jorginho (Ibson 90), Gonzalez, Paulo Assuncao, Ricardo Quaresma (Ivanildo 82), McCarthy (Alan 60), Hugo Almeida.
Inter: Julio Cesar - Cordoba, Materazzi, Samuel, Favalli, Cambiasso, Figo (Ze Maria 82), Veron, Pizarro (Recoba 53), Solari (Adriano 67), Cruz.

Oct 19
Rangers 0
Artmedia Bratislava 0
Att: 49,018. **Ref:** Dauden Ibanez (Spa)
Rangers: Waterreus - Ricksen, Rodriguez, Kyrgiakos (Andrews 59), Bernard, Namouchi (Burke 75), Ferguson, Hemdani, Lovenkrands, Nieto (Thompson 38), Prso.
Artmedia: Cobej - Petras, Debnar, Durica, Urbanek, Vascak (Obzera 69), Kozak, Borbely, Fodrek, Halenar (Tchur 73), Hartig (Stano 83).

GROUP H

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Inter	3	2	0	1	2	2	6
Artmedia	3	1	1	1	3	3	4
Rangers	3	1	1	1	3	3	4
FC Porto	3	1	0	2	6	6	3

Sep 13 Artmedia-Internazionale..... 0-1
Sep 13 Rangers-FC Porto 3-2
Sep 28 Internazionale-Rangers 1-0
Sep 28 FC Porto-Artmedia 2-3
Oct 19 FC Porto-Internazionale..... 2-0
Oct 19 Rangers-Artmedia 0-0
Nov 1 Internazionale-FC Porto
Nov 1 Artmedia-Rangers
Nov 23 FC Porto-Rangers
Nov 23 Internazionale-Artmedia
Dec 6 Rangers-Internazionale
Dec 6 Artmedia-FC Porto

Top two from each group qualify for 1st knockout round; third-placed sides enter UEFA Cup

UEFA CUP

1st round

1st legs - September 15; 2nd legs - September 29

APOEL (Cyp) v Hertha (Ger)
0-1, 1-3 (agg 1-4)
Auxerre (Fra) v Levski Sofia (Bul)
2-1, 0-1 (agg 2-2; Levski on away goals)
Banik Ostrava (Cze) v Heerenveen (Hol)
2-0, 0-5 (agg 2-5)
Basle (Swi) v Siroki Brijeg (Bos)
5-0, 1-0 (agg 6-0)
Bayer Leverkusen (Ger) v CSKA Sofia (Bul)
0-1, 0-1 (agg 0-2)
Besiktas (Tur) v Malmo (Swe)
0-1, 4-1 (agg 4-2)
Bolton (Eng) v Lokomotiv Plovdiv (Bul)
2-1, 2-1 (agg 4-2)
Brann (Nor) v Lokomotiv Moscow (Rus)
1-2, 2-3 (agg 3-5)
Brondby (Den) v Zurich (Swi)
2-0, 1-2 (agg 3-2)
CSKA Moscow (Rus) v Midtjylland (Den)
3-1, 3-1 (agg 6-2)
Dinamo Bucharest (Rom) v Everton (Eng)
5-1, 0-1 (agg 5-2)
Feyenoord (Hol) v Rapid Bucharest (Rom)
1-1, 0-1 (agg 1-2)
Germinal Beerschot (Blg) v Marseille (Fra)
0-0, 0-0 (agg 0-0; Marseille 4-1 on pens)
Grasshopper (Swi) v MyPa (Fin)
1-1, 3-0 (agg 4-1)
Grazer AK (Aut) v Strasbourg (Fra)
0-2, 0-5 (agg 0-7)
Guimaraes (Por) v Wisla Krakow (Pol)
3-0, 1-0 (agg 4-0)
Halmstads (Swe) v Sporting Lisbon (Por)
1-2, 3-2 (agg 4-4; Halmstads on away goals)
Hamburg (Ger) v FC Copenhagen (Den)
1-1, 1-0 (agg 2-1)
Hibernian (Sco) v Dnipro (Ukr)
0-0, 1-5 (agg 1-5)
Kryliya Sovetov (Rus) v AZ Alkmaar (Hol)
5-3, 1-3 (agg 6-6; AZ on away goals)
Lens (Fra) v Groclin Grodzisk (Pol)
1-1, 4-2 (agg 5-3)
Litex Lovech (Bul) v Genk (Blg)
2-2, 1-0 (agg 3-2)
Maccabi Petach Tikva (Isr) v Partizan Belgrade (Ser)
0-2, 5-2 (agg 5-4)
Middlesbrough (Eng) v Xanthi (Gre)
2-0, 0-0 (agg 2-0)
Monaco (Fra) v Willem II (Hol)
2-0, 3-1 (agg 5-1)
Palermo (Ita) v Anorthosis (Cyp)
2-1, 4-0 (agg 6-1)
PAOK Salonika (Gre) v Metalurh Donetsk (Ukr)
1-1, 2-2 (agg 3-3; PAOK on away goals)
Red Star Belgrade (Ser) v Sporting Braga (Por)
0-0, 1-1 (agg 1-1; Red Star on away goals)
Rennes (Fra) v Osasuna (Spa)
3-1, 0-0 (agg 3-1)
Roma (Ita) v Aris Salonika (Gre)
5-1, 0-0 (agg 5-1)
Setubal (Por) v Sampdoria (Ita)
1-1, 0-1 (agg 1-2)
Sevilla (Spa) v Mainz (Ger)
0-0, 2-0 (agg 2-0)
Shakhtar Donetsk (Ukr) v Debrecen (Hun)
4-1, 2-0 (agg 6-1)
Slavia Prague (Cze) v Cork City (Ire)
2-0, 2-1 (agg 4-1)
Stuttgart (Ger) v Domzale (Sln)
2-0, 0-1 (agg 2-1)
Teplice (Cze) v Espanyol (Spa)
1-1, 0-2 (agg 1-3)
Tromso (Nor) v Galatasaray (Tur)
1-0, 1-1 (agg 2-1)
Valerenga (Nor) v Steaua Bucharest (Rom)
0-3, 1-3 (agg 1-6)
Viking (Nor) v Austria Wien (Aut)
1-0, 1-2 (agg 2-2; Viking on away goals)
Zenit St Petersburg (Rus) v AEK Athens (Gre)
0-0, 1-0 (agg 1-0)

Group stage

Group A
Oct 20: CSKA Sofia 0 Hamburg 1; Viking 1 Monaco 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Hamburg	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
Viking	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
Slavia Prague	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CSKA Sofia	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
Monaco	1	0	0	1	0	1	0

Group B
Oct 19: Lokomotiv Moscow 0 Espanyol 1.
Oct 20: Maccabi Petach Tikva 1 Palermo 2.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Palermo	1	1	0	0	2	1	3
Espanyol	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
Brondby	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
M Petach Tikva	1	0	0	1	1	2	0
Lokomotiv M	1	0	0	1	0	1	0

Group C
Oct 20: Halmstads 0 Hertha 1; Steaua Bucharest 4 Lens 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Steaua	1	1	0	0	4	0	3
Hertha	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
Sampdoria	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Halmstads	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
Lens	1	0	0	1	0	4	0

Group D
Oct 20: Dnipro 1 AZ Alkmaar 2; Grasshopper 0 Middlesbrough 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
AZ Alkmaar	1	1	0	0	2	1	3
Middlesbrough	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
Litex Lovech	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dnipro	1	0	0	1	1	2	0
Grasshopper	1	0	0	1	0	1	0

Group E
Oct 20: Basle 0 Strasbourg 2; Tromso 1 Roma 2.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Strasbourg	1	1	0	0	2	0	3
Roma	1	1	0	0	2	1	3
Red Star B	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tromso	1	0	0	1	1	2	0
Basle	1	0	0	1	0	2	0

Group F
Oct 20: CSKA Moscow 1 Marseille 2; Dinamo Bucharest 0 Heerenveen 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Marseille	1	1	0	0	2	1	3
Dinamo Buch'st	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
Heerenveen	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
Levski Sofia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CSKA Moscow	1	0	0	1	1	2	0

Group G
Oct 20: Rennes 0 Stuttgart 2; Shakhtar Donetsk 1 PAOK Salonika 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Stuttgart	1	1	0	0	2	0	3
Shakhtar	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
Rapid Buch'st	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
PAOK	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
Rennes	1	0	0	1	0	2	0

Group H
Oct 20: Besiktas 1 Bolton 1; Zenit St Petersburg 2 Guimaraes 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Zenit	1	1	0	0	2	1	3
Besiktas	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Bolton	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Sevilla	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Guimaraes	1	0	0	1	1	2	0

Teams play all group rivals once; top three from each group qualify for 1st knockout round, where they are joined by the eight third-placed teams from the Champions League group stage

AUSTRIA

Sep 24: Admira 2 Sturm Graz 3; Rapid Wien 2 Wacker Tirol 0; Mattersburg 0 Salzburg 1; Grazer AK 1 Austria Wien 0.
Sep 25: SV Ried 0 Pasching 0.
Oct 1: Pasching 2 Rapid Wien 0; Wacker Tirol 0 Sturm Graz 2; Salzburg 2 SV Ried 0.
Oct 2: Austria Wien 3 Mattersburg 0; Grazer AK 4 Admira 1.
Oct 15: Admira 5 Wacker Tirol 2; Sturm Graz 2 Pasching 0; Rapid Wien 2 Salzburg 3; Mattersburg 3 Grazer AK 1.
Oct 16: SV Ried 0 Austria Wien 0.

AUSTRIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Austria Wien	14	8	2	4	21	15	26
Salzburg	14	8	1	5	18	15	25
Pasching	14	6	6	2	17	8	24
Sturm Graz	14	6	5	3	22	17	23
Grazer AK	14	6	3	5	19	15	21
Rapid Wien	14	5	4	5	23	18	19
SV Ried	14	3	7	4	16	18	16
Mattersburg	14	4	3	7	15	24	15
Wacker Tirol	14	2	7	5	13	22	13
Admira	14	2	2	10	19	31	8

BELGIUM

Saturday, September 24
Beveren 1 (Zezeto 63)
Charleroi 1 (Chabaud 84) Att: 3,500

FC Brussels 1 (De Camargo 49)
Zulte-Waregem 1 (De Brul 82) Att: 4,500

Club Brugge 0
Lokeren 1 (Kristinsson 30) Att: 22,849

Genk 3 (Soley 8, Peeters 76, Vandenbergh 82)
Cercle Brugge 1 (Roiha 1) Att: 20,313

Mouscron 2 (Siljak 19, Filekovic 22)
La Louviere 1 (Jbari 40) Att: 3,620

St Truiden 0
Westerlo 1 (Delen 10) Att: 6,500

Sunday, September 25
Germinal Beerschot 2 (De Wree 38, Agyeman 40)
Standard 2 (Sergio Conceicao 34, Cvitanovic og 47) Att: 7,500

Lierse 0
Anderlecht 0 Att: 9,874

Roeselare 1 (Vandamme 57)
Gent 1 (Cooreman 65) Att: 5,500

Friday, September 30
Charleroi 3 (Camus 17, Siquet 24, Sterchele 75)
Club Brugge 3 (Leko 39, Portillo 78, Victor 83) Att: 13,365

Saturday, October 1
Anderlecht 3 (Jestrovic 70, Mpenza 77, Baseggio 90)
St Truiden 0 Att: 23,012

Gent 1 (Vrancken 48)
Lierse 1 (Yakovenko 84) Att: 7,223

La Louviere 0
FC Brussels 3 (Culek 9, De Camargo 47, 49) Att: 4,408

Standard 2 (Tchite 30, 88)
Lokeren 1 (Zanzan 54) Att: 20,000

Westerlo 4 (Utaka 61, 86, C Janssens 69, Coelho 88)
Beveren 1 (Dissa 63) Att: 5,000

Zulte-Waregem 2 (Dupre 53, Matthijs 87)
Roeselare 1 (Peeters 71) Att: 6,322

Sunday, October 2
Cercle Brugge 1 (Dekelver 63)
Mouscron 0 Att: 4,100

Germinal Beerschot 2 (Dosunmu 25, 67)
Genk 2 (Soetaers 11, Peeters 77) Att: 8,000

Saturday, October 15
Beveren 0
Anderlecht 1 (Jestrovic 37) Att: 7,000

FC Brussels 1 (Culek 81)
Cercle Brugge 2 (Dekelver 2, Selemani og 74) Att: 4,000

Club Brugge 2 (Balaban pen 45, Verheyen 85)
Westerlo 1 (Delen 36) Att: 24,750

Lierse 0
Zulte-Waregem 2 (Sergeant 9, Salou 80) Att: 6,633

Lokeren 4 (Bouchouari 55, Drulic 74, Bance 87, Gretarsson 90)
Charleroi 2 (Chabaud 28, Forschelet 45) Att: 5,000

Mouscron 4 (Oussalah 2, Monteyne og 60, Custovic pen 75, Tailson 83)
Germinal Beerschot 1 (Dosunmu 89) Att: 4,130

Roeselare 4 (De Coninck 15, De Vleeschauwer 45, Durieux og 48, Eloi 64)
La Louviere 1 (Stojkov 7) Att: 4,800

Sunday, October 16
Genk 0
Standard 1 (Tchite 4) Att: 23,428

St Truiden 1 (Mbonabucya 61)
Gent 1 (Vrancken 74) Att: 5,500

BELGIUM

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Standard	10	8	1	1	21	10	25
Anderlecht	10	7	3	0	27	7	24
Westerlo	10	6	2	2	15	5	20
Zulte-Waregem	10	6	2	2	20	12	20
Club Brugge	10	5	3	2	13	10	18
Lokeren	9	5	1	3	13	12	16
Gent	10	4	4	2	13	11	16
Genk	10	3	5	2	16	14	14
Charleroi	10	2	6	2	12	12	12
Roeselare	10	3	2	5	13	14	11
Beveren	10	3	1	6	11	14	10
St Truiden	10	3	1	6	6	12	10
Cercle Brugge	10	3	1	6	9	16	10
FC Brussels	10	2	4	4	12	13	10
Mouscron	10	3	0	7	10	17	9
Lierse	9	1	5	3	5	11	8
Germinal B	10	1	3	6	10	21	6
La Louviere	10	0	4	6	8	23	4

LEADING GOALSCORERS
10 Mohammed Tchite (Standard)
8 Nenad Jestrovic (Anderlecht)
8 Mbo Mpenza (Anderlecht)

BULGARIA

Sep 24: Belasitsa 0 Lokomotiv Sofia 1; Lokomotiv Plovdiv 2 Cherno More 0; Pirin 1922 0 CSKA 3; Lovech 3 Rodopa 0; Naftex 0 Beroe 0.
Sep 25: Vihren 3 Marek 2; Botev 0 Slavia 0.
Oct 1: Beroe 3 Pirin 1922 0; Rodopa 2 Belasitsa 1; Vihren 3 Botev 2.
Oct 2: Cherno More 0 Levski 1; Lokomotiv Sofia 4 Lokomotiv Plovdiv 2; Marek 1 CSKA 4; Slavia 0 Lovech 0.
Oct 15: Belasitsa 2 Slavia 0; Botev 1 Marek 0; CSKA 7 Beroe 0; Naftex 1 Cherno More 0.
Oct 16: Levski 3 Lokomotiv Sofia 1; Lovech 4 Vihren 1; Lokomotiv Plovdiv 3 Rodopa 1.

BULGARIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
CSKA	8	7	1	0	29	5	22
Levski	8	5	3	0	23	11	18
Lok Sofia	9	6	0	3	16	9	18
Vihren	8	6	0	2	16	14	18
Lovech	8	4	1	3	14	8	13
Lok Plovdiv	7	4	1	2	15	12	13
Cherno More	9	4	0	5	11	11	12
Slavia	8	3	2	3	7	6	11
Beroe	9	3	2	4	13	18	11
Pirin 1922	8	2	3	3	7	12	9
Botev	8	2	2	4	5	11	8
Belasitsa	8	2	1	5	8	16	7
Marek	9	1	2	6	7	16	5
Rodopa	9	1	2	6	6	16	5
Naftex	8	1	2	5	4	16	5

Pirin Blagoevgrad have been demoted to the lower leagues because of failure to pay off debts; results annulled

CROATIA

Sep 24: Pula 2 Osijek 2; Cibalia 0 Medimurje 2; Dinamo 5 Kamen Ingrad 0; Rijeka 0 Zagreb 0; Inter 2 Hajduk 2; Varteks 2 Slaven 2.
Oct 1: Osijek 4 Slaven 2; Hajduk 3 Varteks 0; Zagreb 1 Inter 0; Kamen Ingrad 0 Rijeka 1; Medimurje 1 Dinamo 5; Pula 2 Cibalia 3.
Oct 15: Cibalia 3 Osijek 1; Dinamo 1 Pula 0; Rijeka 4 Medimurje 1; Inter 0 Kamen Ingrad 0; Varteks 3 Zagreb 1; Slaven 0 Hajduk 0.

CROATIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Dinamo	11	9	1	1	33	3	28
Rijeka	11	7	3	1	22	12	24
Varteks	11	6	1	4	18	16	19
Hajduk	11	4	4	3	17	9	16
Osijek	11	5	1	5	12	17	16
Kamen Ingrad	11	4	3	4	12	14	15
Zagreb	11	4	3	4	11	14	15
Medimurje	11	4	2	5	14	17	14
Cibalia	11	4	2	5	11	21	14
Inter	11	2	3	6	7	17	9
Slaven	11	1	4	6	12	20	7
Pula	11	1	3	7	10	19	6

CZECH REPUBLIC

Sep 23: Brno 1 Teplice 2.
Sep 24: Liberec 2 Chmel Blsany 0; Sparta 0 Ostrava 2; Pribram 2 Slavia 2; Zlin 0 Plzen 0.
Sep 25: Mlada Boleslav 2 Jablonec 1; Jihlava 1 Slovacko 0.
Sep 26: Most 0 Olomouc 2.
Oct 1: Jablonec 1 Liberec 0; Slovacko 1 Brno 1.
Oct 2: Olomouc 0 Zlin 0; Plzen 2 Most 1; Chmel Blsany 2 Jihlava 2; Teplice 2 Sparta 1.
Oct 3: Slavia 2 Mlada Boleslav 1; Ostrava 0 Pribram 1.
Oct 15: Most 0 Slavia 3; Slovacko 0 Ostrava 0; Sparta 5 Chmel Blsany 2.
Oct 16: Pribram 3 Zlin 0; Mlada Boleslav 2 Plzen 2; Brno 1 Jablonec 1; Jihlava 0 Teplice 4.
Oct 17: Liberec 2 Olomouc 0.

CZECH REPUBLIC

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Liberec	9	7	1	1	16	5	22
Teplice	9	7	1	1	17	7	22
Pribram	9	5	2	2	16	10	17
Slavia	9	4	3	2	16	12	15
Mlada Boleslav	9	4	2	3	18	16	14
Jablonec	9	4	1	4	15	14	13
Sparta	9	4	1	4	13	13	13
Olomouc	9	4	1	4	11	13	13
Plzen	9	3	3	3	12	11	12
Jihlava	9	3	2	4	9	15	11
Most	9	3	0	6	12	14	9
Slovacko	9	2	3	4	9	11	9
Ostrava	9	2	3	4	9	12	9
Zlin	9	2	2	5	8	13	8
Chmel Blsany	9	2	2	5	10	21	8
Brno	9	0	5	4	9	13	5

DENMARK

Sep 24: OB 1 Brondby 3.
Sep 25: AGF 0 Nordsjaelland 2; FC Copenhagen 5 Esbjerg 1; Midtjylland 1 Silkeborg 0; SonderjyskE 1 Horsens 3; Viborg 2 AaB 0.
Oct 1: Nordsjaelland 2 Silkeborg 2.
Oct 2: AGF 2 Esbjerg 2; Brondby 4 Horsens 1; FC Copenhagen 1 OB 1; Viborg 1 SonderjyskE 1; AaB 2 Midtjylland 2.
Oct 15: Midtjylland 0 Viborg 1.
Oct 16: Esbjerg 2 AaB 1; Horsens 0 Nordsjaelland 0; OB 3 AGF 1; Silkeborg 0 FC Copenhagen 3; SonderjyskE 1 Brondby 2.

DENMARK

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
FC Copenhagen	13	10	3	0	26	7	33
Brondby	13	9	2	2	27	14	29
Viborg	13	8	3	2	27	13	27
OB	13	6	4	3	21	15	22
Nordsjaelland	13	4	6	3	20	14	18
Midtjylland	13	4	4	5	19	22	16
AaB	13	3	5	5	17	19	14
Esbjerg	13	3	3	7	16	24	12
Horsens	13	2	6	5	7	18	12
AGF	13	2	4	7	18	27	10
Silkeborg	13	2	4	7	11	24	10
SonderjyskE	13	2	2	9	16	28	8

ENGLAND

Saturday, September 24
Birmingham 2 (Warnock og 72, Pandiani 75)
Liverpool 2 (Luis Garcia 68, Cisse pen 83) Att: 27,733

Bolton 1 (Nolan 25)
Portsmouth 0 Att: 23,134

Chelsea 2 (Lampard 45, pen 75)
Aston Villa 1 (Moore 44) Att: 42,146

Everton 0
Wigan 1 (Francis 47) Att: 37,189

Manchester Utd 1 (Van Nistelrooy 67)
Blackburn 2 (Gamst Pedersen 33, 81) Att: 67,765

Newcastle 1 (Owen 18)
Manchester City 0 Att: 52,280

West Bromwich 1 (Davies 51)
Charlton 2 (Murphy pen 9, 31) Att: 23,909

West Ham 0
Arsenal 0 Att: 34,742

Sunday, September 25
Middlesbrough 0
Sunderland 2 (Miller 2, Arca 60) Att: 29,583

Monday, September 26
Tottenham 1 (Defoe 8)
Fulham 0 Att: 35,427

Saturday, October 1
Blackburn 2 (Kuqi 80, 88)
West Bromwich 0 Att: 20,721

Charlton 2 (Bent 25, 47)
Tottenham 3 (King 51, Hossam 64, Keane 80) Att: 27,111

Fulham 2 (John 2, C Jensen 28)
Manchester Utd 3 (Van Nistelrooy pen 17, 45, Rooney 18) Att: 21,862

Portsmouth 0
Newcastle 0 Att: 20,220

Sunderland 1 (Miller 45)
West Ham 1 (Benayoun 72) Att: 31,212

Sunday, October 2
Arsenal 1 (Clemence og 81)
Birmingham 0 Att: 37,891

Aston Villa 2 (Moore 50, Davis 90)
Middlesbrough 3 (Aiyegbeni pen 33, 88, Boateng 64) Att: 29,719

Liverpool 1 (Gerrard 36)
Chelsea 4 (Lampard pen 27, Duff 43, J Cole 63, Geremi 82) Att: 44,235

Manchester City 2 (Mills 72, Vassell 90)
Everton 0 Att: 42,681

Wigan 2 (Camara 48, McCulloch 63)
Bolton 1 (Jaidi 68) Att: 20,553

Saturday, October 15
Chelsea 5 (Drogba 52, 61, Lampard 55, 59, Gudjohnsen 74)
Bolton 1 (Giannakopoulos 4) Att: 41,775

Liverpool 1 (Cisse 75)
Blackburn 0 Att: 44,679

Middlesbrough 1 (Aiyegbeni 54)
Portsmouth 1 (O'Neil 46) Att: 28,000

Sunderland 1 (Elliott 82)
Manchester Utd 3 (Rooney 40, Van Nistelrooy 76, Rossi 87) Att: 39,085

Tottenham 2 (Hossam 58, Jenas 63)
Everton 0 Att: 36,427

West Bromwich 2 (Kanu 38, Carter 76)
Arsenal 1 (Senderos 17) Att: 26,604

Wigan 1 (Roberts 40)
Newcastle 0 Att: 22,374

Sunday, October 16
Birmingham 0
Aston Villa 1 (Phillips 19) Att: 29,312

Manchester City 2 (Cole 18, 56)
West Ham 1 (Zamora 90) Att: 43,647

Monday, October 17
Charlton 1 (Murphy 47)
Fulham 1 (John 28) Att: 26,310

ENGLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Chelsea	9	9	0	0	23	3	27
Tottenham	9	5	3	1	11	5	18
Man Utd	8	5	2	1	13	6	17
Man City	9	5	2	2	11	7	17
Charlton	8	5	1	2	13	8	16
Wigan	8	5	1	2	8	5	16
Bolton	9	4	2	3	10	11	14
Arsenal	8	4	1	3	11	6	13
West Ham	8	3	3	2	12	7	12
Middlesbrough	9	3	3	3	10	12	12
Blackburn	9	3	2	4	7	10	11
Liverpool	7	2	4	1	5	6	10
Newcastle	9	2	3	4	5	8	9
Aston Villa	9	2	3	4	9	14	9
West Brom	9	2	2	5	9	16	8
Portsmouth	9	1	4	4	6	10	7
Fulham	9	1	3	5	8	14	6
Birmingham	9	1	3	5	7	13	6
Sunderland	9	1	2	6	7	14	5
Everton	8	1	0	7	1	11	3

LEADING GOALSCORERS
8 Ruud Van Nistelrooy (Manchester Utd)
7 Darren Bent (Charlton)
7 Frank Lampard (Chelsea)

FINLAND

FINLAND – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
MyPa	26	17	5	4	51	18	56
HJK	26	15	7	4	43	26	52
Tampere Utd	26	15	6	5	38	21	51
FC Haka	26	13	11	2	47	19	50
Inter Turku	26	12	8	6	38	20	44
Lahti	26	11	5	10	39	36	38
Allianssi	26	8	10	8	33	41	34
KooTeePee	26	9	6	11	35	42	33
TPS	26	8	6	12	30	35	30
KuPS	26	8	5	13	32	45	29
Jaro	26	6	8	12	21	31	26
IFK Mariehamn	26	6	5	15	27	43	23
RoPS	26	3	8	15	18	50	17
TP-47	26	4	4	18	22	47	16

Relegated: RoPS, TP-47
Promoted: Honka, VPS

FRANCE

Saturday, September 24
Auxerre 3 (Luyindula 20, Kahlenberg 42, Cheyrou 52)
Sochaux 0 Att: 8,007

Bordeaux 1 (Darcheville 31)
Ajaccio 0 Att: 19,400

Le Mans 0
Paris SG 0 Att: 14,728

Lille 2 (Moussilou 26, Aboucherouane 66)
Saint-Etienne 0 Att: 13,510

Marseille 3 (Dehu 23, Ribery 47, Niang 69)
Metz 1 (Renouard 12) Att: 47,287

Monaco 0
Nice 0 Att: 14,193

Nancy 2 (Curbelo 55, 73)
Troyes 1 (Grax 27) Att: 15,292

Strasbourg 2 (Hagui 6, 41)
Toulouse 4 (Batlles 2, Moreira 8, Dieuze 64, Santos 76) Att: 15,327

Sunday, September 25
Lens 0
Rennes 0 Att: 23,158

Nantes 0
Lyon 1 (Fred 80) Att: 33,289

Saturday, October 1
Metz 0
Bordeaux 1 (Menegazzo 46) Att: 15,263

Paris SG 2 (Yepes 67, Pauleta 75)
Nantes 0 Att: 42,164

Saint-Etienne 3 (Perrin 42, Hognon 56, Hellebuyck 79)
Le Mans 0 Att: 27,614

Sochaux 0
Nancy 2 (Curbelo 89, Kroupi 90) Att: 11,732

Sunday, October 2
Lille 0
Monaco 1 (Kapo 60) Att: 12,500

Nice 0
Marseille 1 (Ribery 75) Att: 14,283

Rennes 1 (Kallstrom 10)
Lyon 3 (Juninho 52, Tiago 73, Wiltord 87) Att: 28,998

Toulouse 2 (Emana 46, Bergougnoux 53)
Auxerre 0 Att: 18,541

Troyes 1 (Jaziri 73)
Strasbourg 1 (A Farnerud 43) Att: 12,731

Saturday, October 15
Auxerre 3 (Lachuer 26, Luyindula 79, Mwaruwari 84)
Troyes 0 Att: 10,681

Bordeaux 1 (Alonso 90)
Sochaux 1 (Menez 29) Att: 21,985

Le Mans 1 (O Thomas pen 8)
Lille 1 (Moussilou 9) Att: 10,061

Lens 2 (Diarra 46, Thomert 57)
Nice 2 (Roudet 29, Camara 85) Att: 29,354

Monaco 3 (Gigliotti 61, Zikos 65, Meriem 72)
Metz 0 Att: 8,128

Nancy 2 (Diakathe 26, Kroupi pen 50)
Toulouse 0 Att: 17,001

Nantes 1 (Keseru 3)
Saint-Etienne 1 (Savinaud og 10) Att: 34,375

Strasbourg 0
Rennes 1 (Briand 30) Att: 15,672

Sunday, October 16
Lyon 3 (Fred 30, Juninho 50, Wiltord 69)
Ajaccio 2 (Diawara pen 35, Tiago og 54) Att: 36,347

Marseille 1 (Cana 79)
Paris SG 0 Att: 60,000

FRANCE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Lyon	11	8	3	0	18	8	27
Paris SG	11	6	2	3	14	9	20
Bordeaux	11	5	5	1	11	6	20
Auxerre	11	6	1	4	14	15	19
Saint-Etienne	11	4	5	2	11	6	17
Monaco	11	5	2	4	10	9	17
Marseille	11	5	2	4	12	12	17
Nancy	11	5	1	5	16	8	16
Lille	11	4	4	3	15	9	16
Le Mans	11	4	4	3	11	8	16
Lens	10	3	6	1	16	8	15
Toulouse	11	4	2	5	9	13	14
Rennes	11	4	2	5	12	22	14
Nice	11	3	4	4	10	13	13
Nantes	11	3	3	5	9	9	12
Ajaccio	10	2	5	3	9	10	11
Troyes	11	2	4	5	9	14	10
Sochaux	11	2	3	6	5	12	9
Strasbourg	11	0	6	5	5	11	6
Metz	11	0	4	7	4	18	4

LEADING GOALSCORERS
7 Pauleta (Paris SG)
5 Eli Kroupi (Nancy)

GERMANY

Saturday, September 24

Arminia Bielefeld 0
Monchengladbach 2 (Kluge 32, Neuville 68) Att: 21,731

Duisburg 1 (Kurth 28)
Nurnberg 0 Att: 19,411

Hamburg 2 (Van der Vaart 10, Trochovski 62)
Bayern Munich 0 Att: 55,800

Mainz 1 (Zidan pen 64)
Borussia Dortmund 1 (Metzelder 90) Att: 20,300

Schalke 2 (Lincoln 59, Vinicius og 66)
Hannover 0 Att: 60,881

Werder Bremen 2 (Klose 46, Klasnic 77)
Bayer Leverkusen 1 (Rolfes 54) Att: 37,265

Wolfsburg 1 (Klimowicz 35)
Eintracht Frankfurt 0 Att: 17,121

Sunday, September 25

Koln 0
Hertha 1 (Madlung 52) Att: 48,000

Stuttgart 1 (Tomasson 10)
Kaiserslautern 0 Att: 35,000

Saturday, October 1

Bayer Leverkusen 1 (Ramelow 85)
Arminia Bielefeld 1 (Boakye 58) Att: 22,500

Bayern Munich 2 (Santa Cruz 67, Lucio 90)
Wolfsburg 0 Att: 66,000

Eintracht Frankfurt 0
Schalke 1 (Larsen 65) Att: 35,000

Hannover 1 (Delura 8)
Duisburg 1 (Ahanfouf 14) Att: 27,211

Hertha 1 (Dardai 48)
Werder Bremen 2 (Borowski 85, Haedo Valdez 89) Att: 60,000

Monchengladbach 1 (Ze Antonio 32)
Mainz 0 Att: 47,026

Nurnberg 2 (Kiessling 32, 67)
Koln 1 (Helmes 75) Att: 27,418

Sunday, October 2

Borussia Dortmund 0
Stuttgart 0 Att: 73,100

Kaiserslautern 0
Hamburg 3 (Van der Vaart 36, 82, Barbarez 50) Att: 32,000

Saturday, October 15

Arminia Bielefeld 3 (Borges 14, Westermann 19, Zuma 51)
Hertha 0 Att: 20,117

Hamburg 0
Wolfsburg 1 (Klimowicz 19) Att: 55,800

Kaiserslautern 3 (Altintop 13, 56, 78)
Borussia Dortmund 3 (Smolarek 7, 16, 40) Att: 32,051

Mainz 3 (Ruman 57, 75, Thurk pen 61)
Bayer Leverkusen 1 (Barnetta 79) Att: 20,300

Schalke 1 (Larsen pen 90)
Bayern Munich 1 (Santa Cruz 19) Att: 61,542

Stuttgart 1 (Strasser og 90)
Monchengladbach 1 (Kluge 17) Att: 45,000

Werder Bremen 6 (Klose 2, 34, 39, Klasnic 66, 85, Borowski 80)
Nurnberg 2 (Kiessling 16, Schroth 57) Att: 39,542

Sunday, October 16

Duisburg 0
Eintracht Frankfurt 1 (Meier 27) Att: 24,636

Koln 1 (Streit 47)
Hannover 4 (Stajner 48, Brdaric 53, 70, Ricardo Sousa pen 56) Att: 50,000

GERMANY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Werder Bremen	9	7	1	1	27	12	22
Bayern Munich	9	7	1	1	18	6	22
Hamburg	9	6	2	1	17	5	20
Schalke	9	4	5	0	11	6	17
M'gladbach	9	4	3	2	11	10	15
Wolfsburg	9	4	3	2	12	12	15
Hertha	9	4	2	3	12	12	14
B Dortmund	9	2	5	2	14	13	11
Stuttgart	9	2	5	2	10	10	11
B Leverkusen	9	3	2	4	16	17	11
Hannover	9	2	4	3	13	13	10
A Bielefeld	9	2	3	4	9	13	9
Koln	9	3	0	6	12	17	9
Kaiserslautern	9	2	2	5	13	21	8
Mainz	9	2	1	6	8	13	7
Eintracht F'furt	9	2	1	6	4	12	7
Duisburg	9	1	3	5	11	17	6
Nurnberg	9	1	3	5	8	17	6

LEADING GOALSCORERS

10 Halil Altintop (Kaiserslautern)
10 Miroslav Klose (Werder Bremen)
8 Ivan Klasnic (Werder Bremen)
8 Ebi Smolarek (Borussia Dortmund)

GREECE

Sep 24: Olympiakos 2 Akratitos 0; Panathinaikos 3 Panionios 0.
Sep 25: Ionikos 2 Kallithea 1; Larisa 0 AEK 1; OFI 0 Iraklis 1; PAOK 2 Aigaleo 0; Xanthi 1 Levadiakos 0.
Sep 26: Apollon 1 Atromitos 2.
Oct 1: Kallithea 2 Panathinaikos 4; Levadiakos 3 Panionios 2.
Oct 2: AEK 1 Olympiakos 3; Akratitos 0 Ionikos 0; Iraklis 0 Apollon 1; PAOK 2 Larisa 2.
Oct 3: Atromitos 0 Xanthi 1.
Oct 9: Aigaleo 0 OFI 0.
Oct 15: Apollon 0 Aigaleo 0; Atromitos 1 Levadiakos 0; Panathinaikos 1 Akratitos 0.
Oct 16: Ionikos 0 AEK 1; OFI 3 Larisa 2; Panionios 1 Kallithea 0; Olympiakos 1 PAOK 2.
Oct 17: Xanthi 4 Iraklis 1.

GREECE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Xanthi	6	5	1	0	10	2	16
Olympiakos	6	5	0	1	16	3	15
Atromitos	6	3	2	1	9	4	11
Panathinaikos	6	3	2	1	9	5	11
AEK	6	3	2	1	6	4	11
PAOK	6	2	3	1	8	6	9
Apollon	6	2	2	2	5	6	8
Ionikos	6	1	4	1	7	7	7
Aigaleo	6	1	4	1	3	4	7
Larisa	6	1	3	2	7	7	6
Levadiakos	6	1	3	2	5	6	6
Akratitos	6	1	2	3	3	5	5
OFI	6	1	2	3	5	10	5
Panionios	6	1	2	3	7	15	5
Iraklis	6	1	1	4	3	10	4
Kallithea	6	0	1	5	4	13	1

ESM TEAM OF THE MONTH SEPTEMBER 2005

EUROPEAN SPORTS MAGAZINES

La Gazzetta dello Sport · don balon · kicker · СПОРТ-ЭКСПРЕСС SPORT-EXPRESS · FOOT MAGAZINE · WORLD SOCCER · A BOLA · voetbal INTERNATIONAL · FANATIK · TIPS bladet

HOW THEY VOTED

A BOLA (Por)
Cech (Chelsea); Miguel (Valencia), Carragher (Liverpool), Terry (Chelsea), Maldini (Milan); Ballack (Bayern Munich), Guti (Real Madrid), Camoranesi (Juventus), Ronaldinho (Barcelona); Ronaldo (Real Madrid), Eto'o (Barcelona)

FANATIK (Tur)
Cech (Chelsea); Materazzi (Inter), Cris (Lyon), Demichelis (Bayern Munich); Vieira (Juventus), Nunez (Celta Vigo), Van der Vaart (Hamburg), Kaka (Milan); Toni (Fiorentina), Kuijt (Feyenoord), Umit Karan (Galatasaray)

GAZZETTA DELLO SPORT (Ita)
Cech (Chelsea); Sagnol (Bayern Munich), Terlizzi (Palermo), Cris (Lyon), Del Horno (Chelsea); Lampard (Chelsea), Vieira (Juventus), Juninho (Lyon); Ronaldinho (Barcelona), Trezeguet (Juventus), Robinho (Real Madrid)

SPORT EXPRESS (Rus)
Buffon (Juventus); Paulo Ferreira (Chelsea), Terry (Chelsea), Materazzi (Inter), Young (Charlton); Camoranesi (Juventus), Lampard (Chelsea), Ronaldinho (Barcelona), Nedved (Juventus); Shevchenko (Milan), Arveladze (AZ)

VOETBAL INTERNATIONAL (Hol)
Cech (Chelsea); Lucio (Bayern Munich), Van Buyten (Hamburg), Zambrotta (Juventus); Essien (Chelsea), Vieira (Juventus), Alex (Fenerbahce), Van der Vaart (Hamburg); Arveladze (AZ), Toni (Fiorentina), Ronaldinho (Barcelona)

DON BALON (Spa)
Cech (Chelsea); Terry (Chelsea), Cris (Lyon), Ismael (Bayern Munich); Lampard (Chelsea), Juninho (Lyon), Vieira (Juventus), Skacel (Hearts); Arveladze (AZ), Baiano (Celta Vigo), Toni (Fiorentina)

FOOT (Blg)
Cech (Chelsea); Del Horno (Chelsea), Van Buyten (Hamburg), Zambrotta (Juventus); Ronaldinho (Barcelona), Vieira (Juventus), Ballack (Bayern Munich), Van der Vaart (Hamburg); Iaquinta (Udinese), Bent (Charlton), Trezeguet (Juventus)

KICKER (Ger)
Cech (Chelsea); Kuffour (Roma), Lucio (Bayern Munich), Zambrotta (Juventus); Camoranesi (Juventus), Lampard (Chelsea), Vieira (Juventus), Van der Vaart (Hamburg); Shevchenko (Milan), Eto'o (Barcelona), Ronaldinho (Barcelona)

TIPS BLADET (Den)
Cech (Chelsea); Paulo Ferreira (Chelsea), Cris (Lyon), Demichelis (Bayern Munich), Pernia (Getafe); Giuly (Barcelona), Makelele (Chelsea), Vieira (Juventus), Juninho (Lyon); Toni (Fiorentina), Ibrahimovic (Juventus)

WORLD SOCCER (UK)
Cech (Chelsea); Cannavaro (Juventus), Terry (Chelsea), Maldini (Milan); Ronaldinho (Barcelona), Essien (Chelsea), Juninho (Lyon), Alex (Fenerbahce); Fred (Lyon), Mutu (Juventus), Shevchenko (Milan)

HOLLAND

Friday, September 23
Heerenveen 2 (Samaras 1, Pranjic 69)
NEC 1 (Takak 20) Att: 20,400

Saturday, September 24
Ajax 4 (Haristeas 28, 40, Pienaar 70, Galasek pen 86)
Roda JC 1 (Sonko 81) Att: 48,586

PSV 2 (Simons 7, Farfan 47)
RBC 0 Att: 32,200

RKC 2 (De Ceulaer 54, Hoogendorp pen 90)
Utrecht 3 (Van den Bergh 56, Douglas 81, Fortune 90) Att: 4,900

Vitesse 2 (Swerts 48, Benson 90)
Groningen 0 Att: 16,825

Willem II 1 (Reuser 89)
Den Haag 0 Att: 10,850

Sunday, September 25
NAC 2 (Slot 60, Vonlanthen 76)
AZ 1 (Sektioui 12) Att: 15,250

Sparta 2 (Van den Bergh 17, 62)
Heracles 0 Att: 7,982

Twente 1 (Zomer 85)
Feyenoord 3 (Castelen 26, 46, Kuijt 90) Att: 13,250

Friday, September 30
RBC 1 (Van Zwam og 20)
NAC 2 (Vonlanthen 13, Van Hooijdonk pen 64) Att: 5,000

Saturday, October 1
Den Haag 2 (Den Ouden 14, Stroeve 57)
RKC 1 (Van de Haar 38) Att: 6,413

Roda JC 3 (Senden 36, Sergio 40, Oper 73)
Vitesse 2 (Janssen 49, Benson 58) Att: 13,000

Sunday, October 2
AZ 3 (Perez 18, Sektioui 49, Arveladze 63)
NEC 2 (Grot 24, Niedzielan 55) Att: 8,000

Groningen 2 (Luirink 42, Levchenko 45)
Willem II 0 Att: 11,200

Heerenveen 2 (Bosvelt 16, Tarvajarvi 82)
PSV 3 (Kone 36, 56, 69) Att: 21,000

Heracles 0
Twente 4 (Majstorovic 56, Bakircioglu 60, Zomer 83, N'Kufo 90) Att: 8,500

Sparta 1 (Polak 52)
Ajax 2 (De Jong 63, 77) Att: 11,000

Utrecht 3 (Nelisse 7, 49, 51)
Feyenoord 1 (Keller og 39) Att: 20,410

Friday, October 14
Willem II 0
Sparta 0 Att: 11,300

Saturday, October 15
Ajax 0
Heracles 0 Att: 49,650

NAC 0
Heerenveen 3 (Huntelaar 5, 25, 47) Att: 14,850

PSV 3 (Cocu 43, 82, Vennegoor of Hesselink 86)
AZ 0 Att: 33,700

Twente 2 (Bakircioglu 35, 67)
RKC 0 Att: 13,000

Sunday, October 16
Feyenoord 4 (Boussaboun 54, Kuijt 66, Kalou 72, Ghaly 89)
Groningen 1 (Silva 9) Att: 35,000

NEC 3 (Denneboom 23, Niedzielan 45, Grot 85)
RBC 1 (Elkhattabi 44) Att: 11,500

Roda JC 2 (Sergio 54, Oper 58)
Utrecht 1 (Braafheid 35) Att: 12,500

Vitesse 3 (Benson 32, Bodde og 71, Hersi 90)
Den Haag 1 (Stroeve 42) Att: 17,265

HOLLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Feyenoord	8	7	0	1	23	8	21
PSV	8	6	1	1	15	5	19
AZ	8	6	0	2	25	10	18
RKC	8	5	0	3	14	10	15
Ajax	8	4	2	2	15	10	14
NAC	8	4	1	3	10	10	13
Sparta	8	3	2	3	7	9	11
Heracles	8	3	2	3	7	12	11
Twente	8	3	1	4	10	8	10
Utrecht	8	3	1	4	10	11	10
Heerenveen	8	3	1	4	16	18	10
Vitesse	8	3	1	4	11	14	10
Groningen	8	3	0	5	7	11	9
Roda JC	8	3	0	5	12	19	9
Willem II	8	2	2	4	5	8	8
NEC	8	2	2	4	9	13	8
Den Haag	8	2	2	4	8	13	8
RBC	8	0	2	6	4	19	2

LEADING GOALSCORERS
10 Shota Arveladze (AZ)
7 Klaas Jan Huntelaar (Heerenveen)
7 Dirk Kuijt (Feyenoord)
7 Kenneth Perez (AZ)

HUNGARY

Sep 24: Rakospalota 1 Fehervar 2; Vasas 3 Pecs 0; Diosgyor 0 Debrecen 2; Ujpest 5 Tatabanya 1; Gyor 2 Sopron 1; Kaposvar 0 Honved 0; Zalaegerszeg 5 Papa 0.
Sep 25: MTK 2 Ferencvaros 2.
Oct 1: Sopron 1 Ujpest 1; Tatabanya 2 Diosgyor 1; Pecs 4 Rakospalota 0; Papa 0 Kaposvar 0; Fehervar 1 Zalaegerszeg 0.
Oct 2: Ferencvaros 2 Gyor 0.
Oct 3: Debrecen 2 Vasas 2.
Oct 15: Pecs 0 Fehervar 2; Rakospalota 1 Debrecen 2; Vasas 1 Tatabanya 1; Diosgyor 1 Sopron 1; Gyor 1 Honved 2; MTK 7 Papa 0; Kaposvar 1 Zalaegerszeg 1.
Oct 16: Ujpest 2 Ferencvaros 1.
Oct 19: Kaposvar 1 Debrecen 2.

HUNGARY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Fehervar	8	7	0	1	14	3	21
Ujpest	8	5	3	0	21	10	18
Debrecen	8	5	3	0	16	10	18
MTK	7	5	2	0	19	5	17
Zalaegerszeg	8	4	1	3	14	10	13
Vasas	8	3	3	2	14	10	12
Gyor	8	3	3	2	12	12	12
Honved	7	2	4	1	11	8	10
Pecs	8	3	0	5	12	14	9
Tatabanya	8	2	3	3	9	15	9
Kaposvar	8	1	4	3	6	7	7
Diosgyor	8	2	1	5	5	13	7
Ferencvaros	8	1	3	4	12	15	6
Sopron	8	1	3	4	6	12	6
Papa	8	0	4	4	8	22	4
Rakospalota	8	0	1	7	7	20	1

ICELAND

ICELAND – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
FH	18	16	0	2	53	11	48
Valur	18	10	2	6	29	16	32
IA	18	10	2	6	24	20	32
Keflavik	18	7	6	5	28	31	27
Fylkir	18	8	2	8	28	28	26
KR	18	8	1	9	22	24	25
Grindavik	18	5	3	10	23	41	18
IBV	18	5	2	11	18	30	17
Fram	18	5	2	11	19	32	17
Throttur	18	4	4	10	21	32	16

Relegated: Fram, Throttur
Promoted: Breidablik, Vikingur

ICELANDIC CUP – Final

Sep 24 - Laugardalsvollur stadium, Reykjavik
Valur 1 (Adalsteinsson 52)
Fram 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 5,162. **Ref:** Ragnarsson

ITALY

Saturday, September 24
Parma 1 (Delvecchio 14)
Juventus 2 (Camoranesi 44, Vieira 82) Att: 22,050

Reggina 2 (Cozza 42, Cavalli 76)
Udinese 0 Att: 9,153

Sunday, September 25
Cagliari 0
Roma 0 Att: 12,000

Empoli 1 (Pozzi 65)
Lecce 0 Att: 12,000

Inter 1 (Martins 7)
Fiorentina 0 Att: 56,207

Lazio 4 (Rocchi 58, 86, Pandev 60, Manfredini 65)
Palermo 2 (Caracciolo 36, Gonzalez 49) Att: 23,935

Livorno 2 (Palladino 51, C Lucarelli pen 78)
Ascoli 0 Att: 11,121

Sampdoria 1 (Flachi 50)
Chievo 2 (Franceschini 36, Obinna 60) Att: 21,195

Siena 4 (Locatelli 10, 46, Chiesa 28, 41)
Messina 2 (Zoro Kpolo 12, Di Napoli 67) Att: 6,892

Treviso 0
Milan 2 (Shevchenko pen 44, Gilardino 73) Att: 17,389

Saturday, October 1
Chievo 0
Treviso 0 Att: 5,000

Udinese 3 (Iaquinta pen 52, Di Natale 85, Candela 90)
Lazio 0 Att: 17,000

Sunday, October 2
Ascoli 3 (Bjelanovic 28, 78, Foggia 33)
Parma 1 (Pisanu 20) Att: 9,000

Fiorentina 3 (Toni 27, Jorgensen 35, Pazzini 60)
Livorno 2 (Galante 87, Morrone 88) Att: 33,821

Juventus 2 (Trezeguet 22, Nedved 34)
Inter 0 Att: 33,772

Lecce 3 (Konan 8, Pinardi pen 14, Ledesma 69)
Cagliari 0 Att: 11,804

Messina 1 (D'Agostino 77)
Sampdoria 4 (Flachi 45, Bonazzoli 63, 90, Borriello 74) Att: 20,503

Milan 2 (Maldini 5, 20)
Reggina 1 (Cavalli 90) Att: 57,538

Palermo 2 (Caracciolo 7, Makinwa 54)
Empoli 2 (Tavano 9, 42) Att: 26,642

Roma 2 (Taddei 46, Panucci 86)
Siena 3 (Negro 17, Chiesa 54, Colonnese 90) Att: 33,508

Saturday, October 15
Juventus 1 (Del Piero 24)
Messina 0 Att: 30,052

Siena 2 (Chiesa 53, Bertotto og 67)
Udinese 3 (Di Michele 26, 30, 46) Att: 13,602

Sunday, October 16
Ascoli 2 (Tosto 45, 78)
Sampdoria 1 (Bonazzoli 53) Att: 11,992

Cagliari 0
Milan 2 (Gilardino 1, Shevchenko 27) Att: 15,000

Empoli 1 (Tavano 59)
Roma 0 Att: 8,607

Inter 5 (Materazzi 11, Cruz 19, Cambiasso 49, Cordoba 51, Recoba 61)
Livorno 0 Att: 51,413

Lazio 1 (Zauri 82)
Fiorentina 0 Att: 27,502

Palermo 2 (Corini pen 15, Caracciolo 90)
Chievo 2 (Amauri 18, pen 39) Att: 27,092

Parma 1 (Simplicio 34)
Treviso 1 (Fava 67) Att: 13,410

Reggina 2 (Tedesco 13, Cavalli 52)
Lecce 0 Att: 9,588

ITALY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Juventus	7	7	0	0	13	2	21
Milan	7	5	1	1	13	5	16
Inter	7	5	0	2	15	5	15
Fiorentina	7	4	1	2	14	10	13
Lazio	7	4	1	2	10	9	13
Sampdoria	7	4	0	3	14	10	12
Palermo	7	3	3	1	13	12	12
Udinese	7	4	0	3	10	9	12
Chievo	7	3	2	2	8	6	11
Livorno	7	3	2	2	7	9	11
Siena	7	3	1	3	14	14	10
Empoli	7	3	1	3	7	9	10
Ascoli	7	2	3	2	8	8	9
Roma	7	2	2	3	9	6	8
Reggina	7	2	0	5	8	12	6
Parma	7	1	2	4	6	12	5
Lecce	7	1	1	5	5	11	4
Messina	7	0	3	4	6	13	3
Cagliari	7	0	3	4	4	12	3
Treviso	7	0	2	5	2	12	2

LEADING GOALSCORERS
7 Emiliano Bonazzoli (Sampdoria)
6 Enrico Chiesa (Siena)
6 Luca Toni (Fiorentina)

LATVIA

LATVIAN CUP – Final

Sep 25 - Skonto stadium, Riga
Ventspils 2 (Rimkus 99, Slesarcuks 111)
Metalurgs Liepaja 1 (Miceika 94)
Aet. **HT:** 0-0. **90mins:** 0-0. **Att:** 4,000. **Ref:** Lajuks

NORWAY

Sep 24: Lillestrom 1 Tromso 2.
Sep 25: Fredrikstad 1 Aalesund 4; Start 3 Valerenga 0; Viking 1 Ham-Kam 3; Lyn 1 Brann 0; Rosenborg 6 Odd Grenland 0.
Sep 26: Bodo/Glimt 2 Molde 0.
Oct 2: Aalesund 1 Lillestrom 0; Bodo/Glimt 1 Fredrikstad 2; Molde 4 Odd Grenland 0; Ham-Kam 0 Rosenborg 3; Valerenga 0 Lyn 1; Tromso 3 Start 1.
Oct 3: Brann 2 Viking 1.
Oct 15: Start 4 Aalesund 5.
Oct 16: Viking 0 Valerenga 0; Fredrikstad 1 Molde 1; Lyn 0 Tromso 1; Rosenborg 4 Brann 1; Odd Grenland 2 Ham-Kam 2.
Oct 17: Lillestrom 2 Bodo/Glimt 0.

NORWAY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Valerenga	24	13	6	5	38	23	45
Start	24	13	5	6	45	31	44
Lyn	24	11	7	6	30	20	40
Lillestrom	24	12	4	8	34	28	40
Viking	24	11	5	8	34	31	38
Brann	24	10	5	9	40	29	35
Odd Grenland	24	9	4	11	24	47	31
Rosenborg	24	9	3	12	47	41	30
Tromso	24	7	9	8	29	29	30
Ham-Kam	24	8	5	11	29	35	29
Molde	24	8	4	12	37	43	28
Fredrikstad	24	7	6	11	31	42	27
Aalesund	24	6	8	10	29	38	26
Bodo/Glimt	24	6	5	13	28	38	23

POLAND

Sep 23: Legia 1 Polonia 0.
Sep 24: Belchatow 0 Odra 3; Wisla K 5 Lech 1; Groclin 4 Cracovia 1; Gornik Z 4 Wisla P 0; Gornik L 0 Pogon 1; Arka 0 Korona 2.
Sep 25: Amica 3 Zaglebie 1.
Sep 30: Lech 1 Legia 0.
Oct 1: Korona 2 Amica 1; Cracovia 2 Arka 1; Pogon 0 Belchatow 0; Polonia 0 Gornik L 3; Zaglebie 3 Gornik Z 0.
Oct 2: Wisla P 1 Wisla K 2; Odra 1 Groclin 0.
Oct 14: Gornik L 0 Lech 0.
Oct 15: Legia 3 Wisla P 0; Belchatow 2 Polonia 0; Groclin 1 Pogon 3; Gornik Z 0 Korona 3; Cracovia 1 Odra 0; Arka 1 Amica 1.
Oct 16: Zaglebie 2 Wisla K 1.

POLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Wisla K	9	6	2	1	20	9	20
Lech	10	5	3	2	19	17	18
Legia	10	4	4	2	12	7	16
Pogon	10	4	4	2	16	13	16
Amica	10	4	3	3	17	12	15
Korona	10	4	3	3	17	14	15
Cracovia	9	4	3	2	9	11	15
Zaglebie	10	3	4	3	18	17	13
Groclin	10	3	4	3	16	15	13
Gornik Z	10	3	4	3	13	12	13
Odra	10	3	4	3	8	9	13
Gornik L	10	1	7	2	7	7	10
Wisla P	10	3	1	6	11	20	10
Belchatow	10	1	5	4	7	15	8
Arka	10	0	6	4	7	12	6
Polonia	10	1	3	6	7	14	6

PORTUGAL

Friday, September 23
Penafiel 1 (Marco Ferreira 80)
Benfica 3 (Nuno Gomes 4, 83, Simao 11)

Saturday, September 24
Guimaraes 1 (Saganowski 15)
Maritimo 0

FC Porto 2 (McCarthy 17, Jorginho 55)
Belenenses 0

Sunday, September 25
Estrela Amadora 0
Sporting Braga 0

Gil Vicente 2 (Gregory 10, Williams 36)
Pacos Ferreira 0

Naval 1 (Nelson Veiga 35)
Rio Ave 0

Sporting Lisbon 1 (Deivid 36)
Setubal 0

Uniao Leiria 0
Nacional 0

Monday, September 26
Boavista 2 (Fary 5, Joao Pinto 61)
Academica 1 (Luciano 16)

Friday, September 30
Belenenses 0
Estrela Amadora 2 (Semedo 13, 45)

Saturday, October 1
Rio Ave 1 (Gaucho 90)
Boavista 1 (Manuel Jose 60)

Sunday, October 2
Academica 2 (Fernando 22, Joeano 90)
Gil Vicente 0

Maritimo 2 (Mancuso 7, Marcinho 88)
FC Porto 2 (Lisandro Lopez 73, Cesar Peixoto 76)

Nacional 2 (Alexandre Goulart 53, Chilikov 85)
Penafiel 0

Pacos Ferreira 3 (Ronny 42, Didi 45, Junior 90)
Sporting Lisbon 0

Setubal 2 (Ricardo Chaves 38, Fabio 78)
Uniao Leiria 0

Monday, October 3
Benfica 2 (Miccoli 20, Simao 68)
Guimaraes 1 (Targino 33)

Tuesday, October 4
Sporting Braga 1 (Vandinho 4)
Naval 0

Friday, October 14
Rio Ave 1 (Madrid og 55)
Sporting Braga 2 (Milhazes og 28, Vandinho 90)

Saturday, October 15
Guimaraes 0
Nacional 0

FC Porto 0
Benfica 2 (Nuno Gomes 56, 63)

Sunday, October 16
Estrela Amadora 2 (Mauricio 35, Manu 38)
Maritimo 2 (Elias 45, Pedro Simoes og 52)

Naval 2 (Lito 26, Cazarine 52)
Belenenses 1 (Meyong 42)

Penafiel 0
Setubal 1 (Binho 81)

Sporting Lisbon 0
Academica 1 (Marcel 29)

Uniao Leiria 3 (Renato 52, Ferreira 69, Maciel 85)
Pacos Ferreira 0

Monday, October 17
Boavista 2 (Fary pen 8, William Souza pen 89)
Gil Vicente 0

PORTUGAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sporting Braga	7	5	2	0	7	1	17
Nacional	7	4	3	0	8	3	15
FC Porto	7	4	2	1	11	6	14
Benfica	7	4	1	2	12	6	13
Boavista	7	3	4	0	12	6	13
Setubal	7	4	1	2	5	2	13
Sporting Lisbon	7	4	0	3	8	9	12
Naval	7	3	1	3	10	9	10
Rio Ave	7	3	1	3	9	9	10
Belenenses	7	3	0	4	11	10	9
E Amadora	7	2	3	2	8	7	9
Gil Vicente	7	3	0	4	5	6	9
Pacos Ferreira	7	3	0	4	7	11	9
Academica	7	2	2	3	7	7	8
Uniao Leiria	7	1	2	4	4	10	5
Maritimo	7	0	4	3	7	10	4
Guimaraes	7	1	1	5	4	12	4
Penafiel	7	0	1	6	3	14	1

LEADING GOALSCORERS
7 Nuno Gomes (Benfica)
6 Meyong (Belenenses)

ROMANIA

Sep 24: Arges 1 Vaslui 0; Bacau 1 Farul 1; Otelul 0 CFR Cluj 1; Pandurii 2 Gloria 1; Poli Timisoara 0 Sportul 0.
Sep 25: Dinamo 5 Rapid 2; National 1 Jiul 1; Poli Iasi 0 Steaua 1.
Oct 1: CFR Cluj 1 Pandurii 2; Farul 2 Arges 0; Jiul 1 Poli Timisoara 1; Sportul 4 Otelul 0; Vaslui 0 National 0.
Oct 2: Gloria 1 Dinamo 2.
Oct 3: Rapid 1 Poli Iasi 0; Steaua 1 Bacau 0.
Oct 14: Poli Timisoara 2 Vaslui 0.
Oct 15: Dinamo 5 CFR Cluj 0; Bacau 0 Rapid 1; National 0 Arges 1.
Oct 16: Farul 1 Steaua 4; Otelul 0 Jiul 0; Pandurii 0 Sportul 1; Poli Iasi 1 Gloria 1.

ROMANIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Steaua	9	7	2	0	19	4	23
Dinamo	9	7	1	1	29	7	22
Farul	9	5	2	2	13	12	17
Sportul	9	4	4	1	16	7	16
CFR Cluj	9	4	3	2	14	10	15
Rapid	9	4	3	2	12	10	15
Arges	9	4	3	2	10	8	15
National	9	4	2	3	6	10	14
Poli Timisoara	9	3	4	2	10	4	13
Poli Iasi	9	3	1	5	6	10	10
Bacau	9	2	2	5	3	11	8
Jiul	9	1	4	4	5	10	7
Otelul	9	1	4	4	5	16	7
Gloria	9	1	3	5	6	14	6
Pandurii	9	2	0	7	6	15	6
Vaslui	9	0	2	7	3	15	2

RUSSIA

Sep 24: Tom 3 FC Moscow 2; Zenit 0 Shinnik 0; Kryliya Sovetov 1 Saturn 0; CSKA 1 Spartak 0; Lokomotiv 0 Torpedo 3.
Sep 25: Terek 1 Rubin 5; Alaniya 0 Amkar 1; Dinamo 2 Rostov 1.
Oct 1: Shinnik 1 Torpedo 3.
Oct 2: Rostov 1 Alaniya 0; Amkar 0 Terek 0; Rubin 0 Tom 0; FC Moscow 0 CSKA 0; Spartak 1 Kryliya Sovetov 0; Saturn 0 Zenit 0; Dinamo 0 Lokomotiv 0.
Oct 15: Tom 3 Amkar 0; Terek 2 Rostov 3; Torpedo 2 Saturn 0.
Oct 16: Alaniya 2 Dinamo 4; Spartak 1 Zenit 1; Kryliya Sovetov 4 FC Moscow 1; CSKA 2 Rubin 1; Lokomotiv 0 Shinnik 0.

RUSSIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
CSKA	26	14	8	4	39	15	50
Lokomotiv	26	13	11	2	36	16	50
Spartak	26	13	7	6	41	24	46
Zenit	26	12	10	4	41	20	46
Rubin	26	11	9	6	35	26	42
FC Moscow	26	11	8	7	29	21	41
Torpedo	26	10	9	7	32	26	39
Dinamo	26	11	2	13	32	40	35
Shinnik	26	8	11	7	20	22	35
Amkar	26	6	12	8	23	32	30
Saturn	26	7	8	11	20	21	29
Tom	26	6	10	10	21	28	28
Kryliya Sovetov	26	6	8	12	26	39	26
Rostov	26	6	7	13	19	34	25
Alaniya	26	4	7	15	21	46	19
Terek	26	4	5	17	18	43	17

SCOTLAND

Saturday, September 24
Aberdeen 0
Livingston 0 Att: 12,402

Celtic 2 (Beattie 57, 67)
Inverness 1 (Wyness 51) Att: 57,247

Dunfermline 2 (Tod 60, Ross 75)
Dundee Utd 1 (McCracken 41) Att: 5,361

Hearts 1 (Bednar 14)
Rangers 0 Att: 17,379

Kilmarnock 1 (Boyd pen 23)
Falkirk 1 (Gow 11) Att: 5,507

Motherwell 1 (Foran pen 83)
Hibernian 3 (Beuzelin 20, Stewart 68, Riordan 80) Att: 6,461

Saturday, October 1
Aberdeen 2 (Mackie pen 79, 85)
Motherwell 2 (Clarkson 63, 69) Att: 11,448

Dundee Utd 0
Kilmarnock 0 Att: 6,915

Livingston 0
Celtic 5 (McManus 36, Maloney 45, Zurawski 51, Sutton 62, Beattie 72) Att: 9,115

Rangers 5 (Buffel 15, Prso 38, Nieto 71, Lovenkrands 75, McCormack 86)
Dunfermline 1 (Hunt 54) Att: 48,374

Sunday, October 2
Falkirk 2 (Duffy pen 27, Pressley og 68)
Hearts 2 (Pressley 72, 90) Att: 6,342

Hibernian 1 (Fletcher 82)
Inverness 2 (Proctor 49, Wyness 65) Att: 11,683

Saturday, October 15
Celtic 1 (Beattie 13)
Hearts 1 (Skacel 16) Att: 60,100

Dunfermline 0
Falkirk 1 (Duffy 40) Att: 7,068

Hibernian 4 (Caldwell 53, Beuzelin 61, 80, Riordan 81)
Kilmarnock 2 (Ford 7, Fowler 40) Att: 11,731

Inverness 1 (Bayne 73)
Aberdeen 1 (Smith 55) Att: 6,809

Motherwell 1 (Foran 21)
Livingston 0 Att: 4,507

Sunday, October 16
Dundee Utd 0
Rangers 0 Att: 11,696

SCOTLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Hearts	10	8	2	0	24	7	26
Celtic	10	7	2	1	25	10	23
Hibernian	10	6	1	3	19	12	19
Rangers	10	5	2	3	18	10	17
Kilmarnock	10	4	3	3	19	18	15
Motherwell	10	4	2	4	22	21	14
Aberdeen	10	3	4	3	13	12	13
Inverness	10	3	3	4	11	11	12
Dundee Utd	10	2	4	4	11	15	10
Falkirk	10	2	3	5	8	19	9
Dunfermline	10	1	2	7	7	20	5
Livingston	10	0	2	8	2	24	2

LEADING GOALSCORER
8 Rudolf Skacel (Hearts)

SERBIA & MONTENEGRO

Sep 24: Borac 0 Buducnost BD 1; Red Star 4 Obilic 2; Hajduk K 1 Buducnost P 0; OFK 4 Jedinstvo BP 0; Vozdovac 2 Rad 1; Zemun 1 Habitfarm 0; Zeta 1 Partizan 3.
Sep 25: Vojvodina 1 Smederevo 0.
Oct 1: Habitfarm 2 Vojvodina 2; Jedinstvo BP 2 Buducnost BD 0; Obilic 2 Vozdovac 5; OFK 2 Zemun 0; Smederevo 4 Zeta 1.
Oct 2: Buducnost P 1 Red Star 2; Partizan 0 Hajduk K 0; Rad 0 Borac 3.
Oct 15: Borac 1 Obilic 3; Buducnost BD 0 Rad 1; Red Star 2 Partizan 0; Hajduk K 1 Smederevo 0; Vojvodina 1 OFK 0; Vozdovac 4 Buducnost P 1; Zemun 2 Jedinstvo BP 1; Zeta 1 Habitfarm 0.

SERBIA & MONTENEGRO

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Red Star	9	7	1	1	27	11	22
OFK	9	7	0	2	15	2	21
Partizan	9	6	1	2	13	5	19
Vozdovac	9	5	2	2	20	11	17
Zemun	9	5	1	3	11	9	16
Zeta	9	5	1	3	11	12	16
Hajduk K	9	4	3	2	9	8	15
Vojvodina	9	4	2	3	7	7	14
Smederevo	9	4	1	4	11	11	13
Borac	9	3	1	5	10	14	10
Buducnost BD	9	3	1	5	5	11	10
Habitfarm	9	2	2	5	5	9	8
Buducnost P	9	1	4	4	8	14	7
Jedinstvo BP	9	2	1	6	7	17	7
Rad	9	2	0	7	7	14	6
Obilic	9	1	1	7	8	19	4

SPAIN

Saturday, September 24
Atletico Madrid 0
Getafe 1 (Pernia 69) Att: 50,000

Betis 1 (Juanito 38)
Barcelona 4 (Van Bommel 19, Eto'o 59, 77, Ezquerro 89) Att: 45,000

Espanyol 1 (Luis Garcia 59)
Villarreal 2 (Josico 43, Marcos Senna 66) Att: 16,750

Valencia 2 (Aimar 33, Villa 47)
Real Sociedad 1 (Nihat 61) Att: 45,000

Zaragoza 1 (D Milito 13)
Deportivo La Coruna 1 (Diego Tristan 44) Att: 30,000

Sunday, September 25
Alaves 0
Real Madrid 3 (Ronaldo 60, 83, Guti 90) Att: 14,596

Athletic Bilbao 0
Racing Santander 0 Att: 28,000

Celta Vigo 2 (Fernando Baiano 1, Borja Oubina 14)
Sevilla 1 (Maresca 53) Att: 15,000

Mallorca 1 (Choutos 78)
Malaga 4 (Salva 28, Duda 30, 56, Edgar 58) Att: 15,000

Osasuna 2 (David Lopez 27, Moha 88)
Cadiz 0 Att: 13,851

Saturday, October 1
Barcelona 2 (Ronaldinho pen 79, Eto'o 88)
Zaragoza 2 (G Milito 48, D Milito 53) Att: 73,926

Getafe 2 (Riki 43, Redondo 85)
Valencia 1 (Villa 30) Att: 14,500

Sunday, October 2
Cadiz 1 (Fleurquin 14)
Celta Vigo 1 (Fernando Baiano 24) Att: 20,000

Deportivo La Coruna 0
Osasuna 1 (Inaki Munoz 19) Att: 22,000

Malaga 0
Atletico Madrid 2 (Fernando Torres pen 66, Kezman 75) Att: 23,000

Racing Santander 1 (Juanjo 79)
Alaves 2 (Wesley 33, Carpintero 90) Att: 13,832

Real Madrid 4 (Ronaldo 33, Roberto Carlos 45, 65, Julio Baptista 77)
Mallorca 0 Att: 72,140

Real Sociedad 1 (Kovacevic 47)
Betis 1 (Juanito 21) Att: 21,000

Sevilla 1 (Moises og 90)
Espanyol 1 (Fredson 16) Att: 35,000

Villarreal 3 (Riquelme 45, Jose Mari 61, Marcos Senna 77)
Athletic Bilbao 1 (Etxeberria 19) Att: 18,000

Saturday, October 15
Alaves 1 (Nene 13)
Villarreal 1 (Roger 4) Att: 13,231

Atletico Madrid 0
Real Madrid 3 (Ronaldo pen 7, 60, Perea og 90) Att: 60,000

Deportivo La Coruna 3 (Valeron 10, Munitis 72, Ruben Castro 86)
Barcelona 3 (Eto'o 41, Ronaldinho 45, pen 52) Att: 34,000

Sunday, October 16
Athletic Bilbao 0
Sevilla 1 (Daniel Alves 44) Att: 30,000

Betis 1 (Ricardo Oliveira pen 17)
Getafe 0 Att: 30,000

Espanyol 0
Cadiz 2 (Pavoni 66, Jonathan Sesma 80) Att: 21,950

Mallorca 0
Racing Santander 0 Att: 14,000

Osasuna 2 (Milosevic 48, Webo 83)
Celta Vigo 0 Att: 14,592

Valencia 2 (Ayala 9, Vicente 67)
Malaga 1 (Salva 74) Att: 45,000

Zaragoza 0
Real Sociedad 1 (Xabier Prieto pen 11) Att: 30,000

SPAIN

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Real Madrid	7	5	0	2	17	6	15
Osasuna	7	5	0	2	9	5	15
Getafe	7	4	2	1	11	7	14
Celta Vigo	7	4	1	2	10	8	13
Valencia	7	3	3	1	12	10	12
Barcelona	7	2	4	1	14	10	10
Dep La Coruna	7	2	4	1	9	8	10
Real Sociedad	7	3	1	3	10	14	10
Villarreal	7	2	3	2	10	9	9
Cadiz	7	2	3	2	6	6	9
Sevilla	7	2	3	2	5	5	9
Betis	7	2	3	2	5	7	9
Zaragoza	7	1	5	1	8	7	8
R Santander	7	2	2	3	3	4	8
Malaga	7	2	1	4	8	10	7
Atletico Madrid	7	2	1	4	6	9	7
Espanyol	7	2	1	4	5	9	7
Alaves	7	1	3	3	7	11	6
Athletic Bilbao	7	1	2	4	7	10	5
Mallorca	7	1	2	4	7	14	5

LEADING GOALSCORERS
7 Samuel Eto'o (Barcelona)
7 Ronaldo (Real Madrid)
6 David Villa (Valencia)

SWEDEN

Sep 25: Hacken 1 Djurgardens 0; Halmstads 2 Helsingborgs 0; Gefle 1 Kalmar 2.
Sep 26: Landskrona 1 Orgryte 0; IFK Gothenburg 2 Malmo 1; Hammarby 3 Assyriska 0.
Sep 27: Elfsborg 2 Sundsvall 1.
Oct 2: Assyriska 2 IFK Gothenburg 3; Helsingborgs 2 Gefle 1; Orgryte 4 Elfsborg 2; Kalmar 3 Hammarby 0.
Oct 3: Sundsvall 3 Hacken 0; Djurgardens 6 Halmstads 1; Malmo 5 Landskrona 0.
Oct 16: Hacken 1 Kalmar 1; Halmstads 5 Assyriska 0; Gefle 2 Malmo 1.
Oct 17: Elfsborg 2 Helsingborgs 0; Landskrona 1 Sundsvall 0; Orgryte 0 Djurgardens 0; Hammarby 3 IFK Gothenburg 2.

SWEDEN

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Djurgardens	25	15	5	5	52	25	50
IFK Gothenburg	25	13	7	5	34	20	46
Malmo	25	12	5	8	38	26	41
Kalmar	25	10	10	5	34	21	40
Hammarby	25	11	7	7	42	30	40
Helsingborgs	25	12	3	10	32	37	39
Elfsborg	25	10	7	8	34	35	37
Orgryte	25	10	5	10	35	35	35
Hacken	25	10	3	12	28	29	33
Halmstads	25	9	5	11	38	36	32
Landskrona	25	8	6	11	24	40	30
Gefle	25	8	4	13	24	33	28
Sundsvall	25	5	7	13	28	44	22
Assyriska	25	4	2	19	17	49	14

SWITZERLAND

Sep 24: Aarau 2 Thun 1.
Sep 25: Schaffhausen 1 Basle 2; Young Boys 3 Neuchatel Xamax 2; Yverdon 2 Grasshopper 0; Zurich 3 St Gallen 0.
Oct 1: St Gallen 2 Aarau 1.
Oct 2: Basle 5 Thun 1; Grasshopper 1 Zurich 0; Neuchatel Xamax 1 Schaffhausen 0; Young Boys 2 Yverdon 2.
Oct 14: Thun 5 St Gallen 1.
Oct 15: Aarau 1 Young Boys 0; Schaffhausen 0 Grasshopper 2; Yverdon 4 Neuchatel Xamax 1; Zurich 2 Basle 4.

SWITZERLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Basle	12	8	3	1	32	17	27
Grasshopper	12	7	2	3	22	14	23
Zurich	12	6	2	4	27	18	20
Thun	12	6	2	4	23	18	20
Young Boys	12	5	4	3	18	14	19
St Gallen	12	5	2	5	21	23	17
Aarau	12	4	3	5	12	19	15
Yverdon	12	3	2	7	15	21	11
Schaffhausen	12	2	3	7	8	21	9
Neuchatel X	12	2	1	9	12	25	7

TURKEY

Sep 23: Trabzonspor 0 Manisaspor 2.
Sep 24: Denizlispor 1 Gaziantepspor 2; Fenerbahce 3 Kayserispor 0; Genclerbirligi 2 Malatyaspor 0.
Sep 25: Ankaraspor 2 Besiktas 0; Diyarbakirspor 0 Ankaragucu 3; Erciyesspor 0 Sivasspor 0; Rizespor 1 Konyaspor 1; Samsunspor 1 Galatasaray 2.
Sep 30: Gaziantepspor 1 Genclerbirligi 1.
Oct 1: Konyaspor 2 Fenerbahce 4; Sivasspor 1 Denizlispor 0; Manisaspor 0 Erciyesspor 2.
Oct 2: Ankaragucu 1 Rizespor 0; Besiktas 3 Samsunspor 2; Galatasaray 4 Trabzonspor 1; Malatyaspor 1 Diyarbakirspor 2; Kayserispor 2 Ankaraspor 1.
Oct 15: Ankaraspor 0 Konyaspor 0; Diyarbakirspor 1 Gaziantepspor 2; Erciyesspor 1 Galatasaray 2; Fenerbahce 2 Ankaragucu 1.
Oct 16: Besiktas 0 Kayserispor 0; Denizlispor 1 Manisaspor 1; Genclerbirligi 0 Sivasspor 1; Rizespor 1 Malatyaspor 0; Samsunspor 3 Trabzonspor 1.

TURKEY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Galatasaray	9	8	1	0	24	9	25
Fenerbahce	9	7	2	0	22	10	23
Sivasspor	9	5	3	1	8	5	18
Kayserispor	9	5	1	3	14	10	16
Erciyesspor	9	4	4	1	11	7	16
Gaziantepspor	9	4	3	2	13	12	15
Besiktas	9	3	3	3	10	9	12
Konyaspor	9	2	5	2	11	9	11
Ankaraspor	9	2	5	2	10	9	11
Trabzonspor	9	3	2	4	11	14	11
Manisaspor	9	2	3	4	13	13	9
Ankaragucu	9	2	3	4	10	11	9
Genclerbirligi	9	1	5	3	5	8	8
Samsunspor	9	2	2	5	17	21	8
Rizespor	9	2	2	5	6	10	8
Diyarbakirspor	9	2	2	5	9	18	8
Denizlispor	9	1	3	5	5	11	6
Malatyaspor	9	0	3	6	6	19	3

UKRAINE

Sep 24: Zakarpattya 0 Shakhtar 3.
Sep 25: Metalist 1 Arsenal 2; Stal 1 Metalurh Z 1; Dynamo 7 Volyn 1; Chornomorets 0 Dnipro 0; Metalurh D 1 FC Kharkiv 1; Vorskla 0 Kryvbas 0; Illichivets 0 Tavriya 1.
Oct 2: Arsenal 1 Stal 1; Metalurh Z 3 Zakarpattya 0; Tavriya 2 Vorskla 3; FC Kharkiv 0 Chornomorets 1; Volyn 3 Metalist 0.
Oct 3: Kryvbas 0 Metalurh D 1; Shakhtar 6 Illichivets 0; Dnipro 0 Dynamo 3.
Oct 16: Metalist 1 Stal 0; Zakarpattya 2 Arsenal 1; Volyn 2 Dnipro 1; Dynamo 1 FC Kharkiv 0; Chornomorets 2 Kryvbas 1; Metalurh D 0 Tavriya 0; Vorskla 0 Shakhtar 2; Illichivets 1 Metalurh Z 0.

UKRAINE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Shakhtar	12	10	2	0	30	5	32
Dynamo	12	9	3	0	31	7	30
Chornomorets	12	7	2	3	19	10	23
Volyn	12	6	2	4	17	22	20
Metalurh D	12	5	5	2	19	9	20
Metalist	12	6	1	5	17	21	19
Illichivets	12	5	3	4	10	15	18
FC Kharkiv	12	4	3	5	18	15	15
Arsenal	12	3	5	4	12	15	14
Tavriya	12	4	1	7	10	16	13
Kryvbas	12	3	4	5	8	9	13
Dnipro	12	3	2	7	9	15	11
Stal	12	2	5	5	8	18	11
Vorskla	12	2	4	6	10	19	10
Metalurh Z	12	2	3	7	14	23	9
Zakarpattya	12	1	3	8	5	18	6

SOUTH AMERICA

ARGENTINA

OPENING CHAMPIONSHIP

Friday, September 23
Velez Sarsfield 1 (Castroman 3)
Newell's Old Boys 0

Saturday, September 24
Independiente 1 (Frutos pen 9)
Tiro Federal 0

Rosario Central 0
Gimnasia LP 3 (Vargas 50, 53, 55)

Sunday, September 25
Arsenal 1 (Piriz Alvez 43)
Banfield 1 (Galvan 59)

Boca Juniors 2 (Diaz 21, Palacio 41)
Racing Club 0

Estudiantes 1 (Calderon 77)
River Plate 0

Gimnasia J 2 (Serrizuela pen 15, 66)
Colon Santa Fe 2 (Denis 19, Lussenhoff 89)

Instituto 2 (Pilipauskas 16, Bergessio 28)
San Lorenzo 0

Lanus 1 (Archubi 39)
Argentinos Juniors 1 (Pisculichi 47)

Olimpo 1 (Maggiolo 85)
Quilmes 0

Friday, September 30
Newell's Old Boys 3 (Belluschi 41, 46, Scocco 45)
Estudiantes 2 (Pavone 53, Calderon 73)

Saturday, October 1
Argentinos Juniors 1 (Martinez 54)
Instituto 0

Banfield 0
Velez Sarsfield 0

Colon Santa Fe 0
Arsenal 0

Gimnasia LP 1 (Vargas 81)
Lanus 0

San Lorenzo 1 (Lavezzi 24)
Gimnasia J 1 (Ramon 18)

Tiro Federal 1 (Tilger 84)
Olimpo 1 (Ramirez 55)

Sunday, October 2
Quilmes 0
Boca Juniors 4 (Palermo pen 12, 43, Palacio 53, 87)

Racing Club 0
Rosario Central 1 (Ruben 60)

River Plate 3 (Montenegro 24, Garcia 45, 46)
Independiente 1 (Bustos Montoya 4)

Tuesday, October 4
Estudiantes 2 (Calderon pen 42, Maceratesi pen 73)
Banfield 0

Lanus 1 (Graf 25)
Racing Club 0

Velez Sarsfield 2 (Centurion 8, Gracian 20)
Colon Santa Fe 1 (Moreno y Fabianesi 33)

Wednesday, October 5
Boca Juniors 2 (Bilos 48, 64)
Tiro Federal 1 (Campora 51)

Independiente 2 (Aguero 34, 74)
Newell's Old Boys 0

Olimpo 2 (Ramirez 12, 59)
River Plate 1 (Garcia 64)

Rosario Central 2 (Villa 35, Ruben 38)
Quilmes 1 (Choy 46)

San Lorenzo 1 (Peirone 18)
Argentinos Juniors 3 (Carrario 49, 61, Pisculichi pen 69)

Friday, October 7
Gimnasia J 1 (Oyola 24)
Arsenal 1 (Esmerado 8)

Instituto 0
Gimnasia LP 1 (Vargas 74)

Friday, October 14
Argentinos Juniors 1 (Pisculichi 81)
Gimnasia J 2 (Quinteros 33, Silva 75)

Saturday, October 15
Gimnasia LP 3 (Delorte 18, 46, Gentiletti 34)
San Lorenzo 2 (Lavezzi 1, Peirone 13)

Racing Club 2 (Grabinski 5, Cabral 88)
Instituto 3 (Bergessio 20, 22, Brandan 56)

Sunday, October 16
Arsenal 0
Velez Sarsfield 1 (Gracian 90)

Banfield 2 (Mendoza 27, Sand 48)
Independiente 2 (Bustos Montoya 46, Aguero 60)

Colon Santa Fe 2 (Denis 52, Lussenhoff 71)
Estudiantes 1 (Caceres 19)

Newell's Old Boys 0
Olimpo 1 (Benitez 56)

Quilmes 0
Lanus 1 (Gioda 10)

River Plate 0
Boca Juniors 0

Tuesday, October 18
Tiro Federal 4 (Aquino 54, Campora 66, 76, 89)
Rosario Central 0

ARGENTINA – OPENING	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Boca Juniors	11	7	3	1	23	8	24
Velez Sarsfield	11	7	2	2	16	6	23
Argentinos Jnrs	11	6	3	2	12	7	21
Independiente	11	5	4	2	20	13	19
Gimnasia LP	11	6	1	4	14	14	19
Banfield	11	4	6	1	14	9	18
Olimpo	11	4	6	1	12	9	18
San Lorenzo	11	4	4	3	18	16	16
Estudiantes	11	5	1	5	12	11	16
Rosario Central	11	4	3	4	13	18	15
Arsenal	11	3	5	3	11	11	14
River Plate	11	4	2	5	12	13	14
Lanus	11	3	5	3	11	15	14
Gimnasia J	11	2	5	4	13	16	11
Racing Club	11	3	2	6	12	16	11
Instituto	11	2	5	4	6	11	11
Quilmes	11	2	4	5	11	16	10
Colon Santa Fe	11	2	3	6	14	21	9
Newell's OB	11	2	3	6	11	18	9
Tiro Federal	11	1	1	9	10	17	4

LEADING GOALSCORERS
9 Nicolas Frutos (Independiente)
7 Rodrigo Palacio (Boca Juniors)

BOLIVIA

OPENING CHAMPIONSHIP

Sep 24: The Strongest 0 Blooming 1; Jorge Wilstermann 2 Iberoamericana 0.
Sep 25: San Jose 3 Destroyers 1; La Paz 1 Aurora 0; Union Central 4 Real Potosi 2; Oriente 1 Bolivar 2.
Sep 29: Blooming 2 Jorge Wilstermann 3.
Oct 1: Iberoamericana 1 San Jose 2; Bolivar 4 Union Central 0.
Oct 2: Real Potosi 2 La Paz 1; Aurora 1 Oriente 1.
Oct 3: Destroyers 3 The Strongest 1.
Oct 15: Iberoamericana 1 Destroyers 3.
Oct 16: The Strongest 1 Jorge Wilstermann 0; Blooming 3 San Jose 0; Aurora 0 Bolivar 1; Real Potosi 1 Oriente 1; Union Central 1 La Paz 2.

BOLIVIA – OPENING – GROUP A	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Blooming	7	4	1	2	20	10	13
J Wilstermann	7	4	1	2	13	8	13
San Jose	7	4	1	2	13	10	13
Destroyers	7	4	0	3	22	12	12
The Strongest	7	3	1	3	5	7	10
Iberoamericana	7	0	0	7	3	26	0

GROUP B	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bolivar	7	6	1	0	18	6	19
Oriente	7	3	3	1	11	7	12
La Paz	7	3	2	2	10	11	11
Union Central	7	2	1	4	7	16	7
Real Potosi	7	1	3	3	9	13	6
Aurora	7	0	2	5	5	10	2

BRAZIL

Sep 24: Sao Paulo 4 Paysandu 1; Fortaleza 2 Parana 2; Brasiliense 1 Sao Caetano 1.
Sep 25: Juventude 0 Botafogo 0; Figueirense 2 Atletico Paranaense 0; Ponte Preta 2 Cruzeiro 3; Flamengo 1 Corinthians 3; Coritiba 2 Vasco da Gama 0; Fluminense 4 Santos 3; Atletico Mineiro 1 Internacional 1; Palmeiras 3 Goias 1.
Oct 1: Santos 0 Fortaleza 0; Parana 3 Coritiba 2; Sao Caetano 3 Atletico Mineiro 1; Paysandu 3 Figueirense 1; Cruzeiro 2 Juventude 0; Goias 4 Ponte Preta 1.
Oct 2: Internacional 2 Fluminense 2; Vasco da Gama 0 Palmeiras 0; Atletico Paranaense 2 Flamengo 0; Botafogo 1 Sao Paulo 1; Corinthians 3 Brasiliense 2.
Oct 4: Santos 2 Sao Caetano 0; Ponte Preta 3 Juventude 2; Coritiba 0 Goias 2; Atletico Mineiro 0 Parana 1.
Oct 5: Internacional 3 Sao Paulo 0; Figueirense 1 Botafogo 0; Fortaleza 1 Atletico Paranaense 4; Vasco da Gama 3 Cruzeiro 3; Fluminense 0 Corinthians 2; Palmeiras 5 Paysandu 3; Brasiliense 2 Flamengo 3.
Oct 8: Juventude 3 Santos 1; Parana 6 Fluminense 1; Botafogo 1 Palmeiras 2; Cruzeiro 4 Figueirense 0; Corinthians 3 Fortaleza 0; Goias 4 Vasco da Gama 3.
Oct 11: Sao Paulo 3 Ponte Preta 2; Sao Caetano 1 Internacional 1; Paysandu 2 Coritiba 1; Flamengo 1 Atletico Mineiro 2; Atletico Paranaense 4 Brasiliense 0.
Oct 12: Vasco da Gama 3 Figueirense 3*; Cruzeiro 2 Botafogo 2*; Juventude 3 Fluminense 4*.
Oct 13: Santos 2 Corinthians 3*.
Oct 15: Figueirense 2 Parana 0; Fortaleza 1 Paysandu 2; Fluminense 3 Botafogo 2; Coritiba 1 Atletico Paranaense 2; Brasiliense 1 Juventude 0.
Oct 16: Santos 1 Goias 1; Internacional 3 Vasco da Gama 1; Ponte Preta 1 Sao Caetano 2; Flamengo 1 Sao Paulo 6; Atletico Mineiro 0 Cruzeiro 1; Palmeiras 1 Corinthians 1.
Oct 19: Vasco da Gama 1 Botafogo 0*; Juventude 2 Figueirense 2*; Paysandu 4 Cruzeiro 1*; Ponte Preta 2 Sao Paulo 0*.

BRAZIL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Corinthians	31	19	6	6	67	48	63
Goias	32	17	6	9	51	39	57
Internacional	31	16	8	7	55	38	56
Fluminense	31	15	9	7	60	48	54
Palmeiras	32	15	8	9	60	47	53
Parana	32	14	9	9	49	38	51
Santos	32	13	10	9	57	49	49
At Paranaense	32	13	6	13	56	48	45
Cruzeiro	32	12	9	11	57	55	45
Ponte Preta	32	13	5	14	48	54	44
Sao Paulo	31	12	8	11	60	50	44
Fortaleza	32	12	5	15	44	50	41
Botafogo	32	11	7	14	45	48	40
Sao Caetano	32	11	7	14	40	46	40
Juventude	32	10	9	13	46	53	39
Coritiba	31	10	8	13	39	44	38
Vasco da Gama	32	9	9	14	56	71	36
Paysandu	32	10	5	17	53	69	35
Figueirense	32	8	10	14	41	55	34
Flamengo	32	8	10	14	37	51	34
At Mineiro	32	9	6	17	40	46	33
Brasiliense	31	8	8	15	39	53	32

The results of all 11 matches refereed by Edilson Pereira de Carvalho this season were annulled and the games ordered to be replayed because of his involvement in a match-fixing ring. Those games marked with an asterisk above are the replays; three have yet to be played

CHILE

CLOSING CHAMPIONSHIP

Sep 24: Cobreloa 2 U de Concepcion 0; Dep Concepcion 1 Cobresal 0; Palestino 1 U de Chile 1; Dep La Serena 0 Everton 0; Santiago Wanderers 3 Puerto Montt 1.
Sep 25: Rangers 5 Dep Temuco 1; Huachipato 3 Union Espanola 1; Dep Melipilla 1 Audax Italiano 0; San Felipe 2 Coquimbo Unido 1; Colo Colo 0 U Catolica 0.
Sep 27: Dep Concepcion 1 Cobreloa 0.
Sep 28: Cobresal 2 Dep Melipilla 0; Puerto Montt 0 Colo Colo 3; Dep Temuco 1 U de Concepcion 2; Union Espanola 0 San Felipe 1; Audax Italiano 0 Dep La Serena 0; Santiago Wanderers 1 Rangers 1; Coquimbo Unido 2 Everton 2; U de Chile 2 Huachipato 1.
Sep 29: U Catolica 3 Palestino 0.
Oct 1: Huachipato 2 Colo Colo 2; Cobreloa 3 Santiago Wanderers 0; Dep Melipilla 1 Dep Concepcion 0; Dep La Serena 2 Dep Temuco 0; San Felipe 1 Puerto Montt 1.
Oct 2: U de Concepcion 0 U Catolica 1; Rangers 0 Coquimbo Unido 1; Everton 3 Cobresal 1; U de Chile 5 Union Espanola 3; Palestino 4 Audax Italiano 0.
Oct 7: Union Espanola 2 Cobresal 1; U de Concepcion 1 Santiago Wanderers 0; Palestino 3 Coquimbo Unido 1.
Oct 9: Everton 1 Dep Melipilla 1; U Catolica 3 Rangers 0.
Oct 14: Puerto Montt 0 Huachipato 1.
Oct 15: Dep Concepcion 1 San Felipe 1; Palestino 0 Dep Melipilla 0.
Oct 16: Cobresal 3 Cobreloa 1; Audax Italiano 1 U de Concepcion 1; Santiago Wanderers 1 Union Espanola 1; Dep Temuco 0 Everton 3; Coquimbo Unido 1 Dep La Serena 2; Colo Colo 4 Rangers 1.

CHILE – CLOSING – GROUP 1	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
U Catolica	12	9	3	0	19	0	30
Dep Concepcion	13	6	5	2	16	13	23
Huachipato	13	6	3	4	18	14	21
San Felipe	13	4	4	5	17	19	16
Puerto Montt	13	4	2	7	11	19	14

GROUP 2	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
U de Chile	12	8	2	2	22	16	26
Everton	13	3	6	4	17	16	15
S Wanderers	13	4	3	6	10	18	15
Dep La Serena	13	3	5	5	15	15	14
Dep Temuco	13	4	1	8	9	27	13

GROUP 3	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Cobresal	13	6	2	5	23	16	20
Rangers	13	4	4	5	19	20	16
Audax Italiano	13	4	4	5	14	17	16
Palestino	13	3	5	5	16	19	14
Cobreloa	13	3	4	6	15	16	13

GROUP 4	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Colo Colo	13	8	4	1	32	12	28
Union Espanola	13	4	5	4	20	20	17
Dep Melipilla	13	5	2	6	9	12	17
U Concepcion	13	4	1	8	13	20	13
Coquimbo U'do	13	2	5	6	15	21	11

COLOMBIA

CLOSING CHAMPIONSHIP

Sep 24: Real Cartagena 1 Indep Medellin 3.
Sep 25: America 4 At Junior 1; Tolima 2 Dep Cali 0; Magdalena 0 Bucaramanga 2; At Nacional 1 Envigado 0; Once Caldas 2 Chico 1; Indep Santa Fe 1 At Huila 0; Dep Pasto 1 Millonarios 0; Quindio 3 Pereira 2.
Oct 1: Millonarios 1 Indep Santa Fe 3.
Oct 2: America 0 Tolima 2; At Junior 0 Real Cartagena 0; Indep Medellin 4 Quindio 0; Pereira 5 Dep Pasto 3; At Huila 3 Once Caldas 3; Chico 0 At Nacional 0; Envigado 2 Magdalena 1; Bucaramanga 1 Dep Cali 1.
Oct 15: Real Cartagena 2 America 1.
Oct 16: Tolima 1 Bucaramanga 0; Dep Cali 1 Envigado 1; Magdalena 2 Chico 2; At Nacional 1 At Huila 2; Once Caldas 2 Millonarios 1; Indep Santa Fe 4 Pereira 2; Dep Pasto 0 Indep Medellin 1; Quindio 3 At Junior 1.
Oct 19: Pereira 0 Once Caldas 2; Millonarios 0 At Nacional 0; At Huila 0 Magdalena 0; Chico 0 Dep Cali 0; Envigado 2 Bucaramanga 2; Real Cartagena 2 Tolima 1; America 2 Quindio 2; At Junior 1 Dep Pasto 0; Indep Medellin 1 Indep Santa Fe 0.

COLOMBIA – CLOSING	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
America	15	9	1	5	22	15	28
Real Cartagena	15	7	5	3	25	17	26
Indep Medellin	15	8	1	6	25	19	25
Pereira	15	8	1	6	24	23	25
At Nacional	15	6	6	3	21	14	24
Tolima	15	7	2	6	19	15	23
At Junior	15	7	2	6	20	26	23
Once Caldas	15	6	5	4	21	20	23
Millonarios	15	7	1	7	18	16	22
Bucaramanaga	15	6	4	5	18	13	22
Indep Santa Fe	15	6	4	5	16	15	22
Dep Cali	15	5	6	4	23	22	21
Envigado	15	5	5	5	18	16	20
Dep Pasto	15	5	4	6	17	17	19
Quindio	15	5	4	6	16	18	19
At Huila	15	4	3	8	17	26	15
Chico	15	2	4	9	9	22	10
Magdalena	15	0	6	9	14	29	6

ECUADOR

CLOSING CHAMPIONSHIP

Sep 24: El Nacional 4 Espoli 3; Dep Quito 1 Dep Cuenca 1; LDU Loja 2 Olmedo 3.
Sep 25: Emelec 1 LDU Quito 0; Aucas 2 Barcelona 0.
Sep 28: LDU Quito 0 Aucas 3; Olmedo 2 El Nacional 0; Espoli 5 Dep Quito 0; Dep Cuenca 1 Emelec 0; Barcelona 2 LDU Loja 0.
Oct 15: LDU Loja 2 Espoli 1.
Oct 16: El Nacional 2 LDU Quito 3; Olmedo 1 Barcelona 1; Aucas 2 Dep Cuenca 3; Emelec 2 Dep Quito 0.
Oct 19: Dep Quito 1 Aucas 1; Dep Cuenca 1 El Nacional 1; Barcelona 1 Emelec 1; LDU Quito 3 LDU Loja 0; Espoli 2 Olmedo 3.

ECUADOR – CLOSING	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
El Nacional	13	7	3	3	28	19	24
Dep Cuenca	13	5	8	0	14	9	23
Olmedo	13	6	4	3	21	16	22
Barcelona	13	5	5	3	18	15	20
Emelec	13	5	4	4	17	14	19
Aucas	13	5	2	6	16	16	17
Dep Quito	13	4	5	4	15	20	17
LDU Quito	13	4	4	5	16	17	16
Espoli	13	3	2	8	20	28	11
LDU Loja	13	1	3	9	14	25	6

PARAGUAY

CLOSING CHAMPIONSHIP

Sep 23: Tacuary 2 Sportivo Luqueno 1.
Sep 24: Nacional 1 Guarani 2.
Sep 25: Libertad 3 3 de Febrero 2; General Caballero 2 12 de Octubre 2; Olimpia 4 Cerro Porteno 1.
Oct 1: Sportivo Luqueno 1 Nacional 1.
Oct 2: 3 de Febrero 1 Tacuary 0; Guarani 0 Olimpia 1; 12 de Octubre 2 Libertad 1.
Oct 3: Cerro Porteno 2 General Caballero 0.
Oct 15: Guarani 0 General Caballero 2; Cerro Porteno 0 Libertad 1; Tacuary 0 Nacional 0.
Oct 16: 12 de Octubre 0 3 de Febrero 5; Sportivo Luqueno 0 Olimpia 0.

PARAGUAY – CLOSING	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Olimpia	10	5	3	2	15	9	18
Nacional	10	4	5	1	11	6	17
Libertad	10	5	2	3	15	11	17
Cerro Porteno	10	5	1	4	18	14	16
Tacuary	10	3	5	2	15	15	14
Guarani	10	4	1	5	12	13	13
Sp Luqueno	10	3	4	3	13	16	13
3 de Febrero	10	3	2	5	12	12	11
Gen Caballero	10	3	1	6	11	16	10
12 de Octubre	10	1	4	5	9	19	7

PERU

CLOSING CHAMPIONSHIP

Sep 24: Universitario 1 Coronel Bolognesi 2; Sporting Cristal 4 Melgar 0; Sport Boys 0 Universidad SMP 2; At Universidad 3 Universidad CV 3.
Sep 25: Alianza Atletico 2 Alianza Lima 1; Cienciano 2 Union Huaral 1.
Sep 28: Alianza Lima 0 Sporting Cristal 0; Coronel Bolognesi 2 Alianza Atletico 0; Universidad CV 1 Universitario 0; Universidad SMP 2 At Universidad 1; Sport Ancash 2 Sport Boys 0; Melgar 3 Cienciano 0.
Oct 1: Universitario 1 Universidad SMP 1; Sporting Cristal 2 Coronel Bolognesi 0; Union Huaral 1 Melgar 1.
Oct 2: Alianza Atletico 4 Universidad CV 2; Cienciano 2 Alianza Lima 1; At Universidad 2 Sport Ancash 0.
Oct 15: Alianza Lima 0 Union Huaral 1; Universidad CV 1 Sporting Cristal 4.
Oct 16: Coronel Bolognesi 2 Cienciano 1; Universidad SMP 1 Alianza Atletico 0; Sport Ancash 1 Universitario 2; Sport Boys 2 At Universidad 2.

PERU – CLOSING	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sporting Cristal	11	7	4	0	15	2	25
Univ SMP	11	7	2	2	22	7	23
C Bolognesi	11	7	0	4	17	12	21
Sport Ancash	11	6	2	3	12	10	20
At Universidad	12	5	2	5	19	18	17
Universitario	11	4	3	4	14	12	15
Melgar	11	4	3	4	12	21	15
Alianza Atletico	10	4	2	4	10	10	14
Sport Boys	11	3	5	3	10	10	14
Univ CV	11	3	2	6	12	18	11
Cienciano	10	3	1	6	10	18	10
Union Huaral	11	2	1	8	6	16	7
Alianza Lima	11	1	3	7	5	10	6

URUGUAY

OPENING CHAMPIONSHIP

Sep 24: Rocha 4 Cerro 1; Wanderers 3 Cerrito 2; Paysandu 1 Penarol 3.
Sep 25: Rentistas 0 Dep Colonia 1; Tacuarembo 0 River Plate 3; Rampla Juniors 2 Danubio 0; Miramar Misiones 0 Liverpool 1; Plaza 1 Defensor 1; Fenix 1 Nacional 2.
Oct 1: River Plate 2 Rocha 1; Paysandu 0 Rampla Juniors 2; Nacional 1 Tacuarembo 0.
Oct 2: Miramar Misiones 0 Rentistas 1; Fenix 2 Dep Colonia 2; Cerrito 0 Plaza 1; Danubio 2 Cerro 3; Liverpool 3 Wanderers 3; Defensor 1 Penarol 1.
Oct 15: Penarol 4 Dep Colonia 1; Cerro 1 River Plate 1.
Oct 16: Fenix 0 Cerrito 1; Wanderers 1 Miramar Misiones 1; Plaza 0 Danubio 0; Tacuarembo 1 Paysandu 0; Rampla Juniors 2 Liverpool 2; Defensor 0 Rocha 2; Nacional 1 Rentistas 0.

URUGUAY – OPENING

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Nacional	8	6	1	1	16	7	19
Penarol	8	5	3	0	14	6	18
Dep Colonia	8	4	3	1	15	12	15
Rentistas	8	5	0	3	7	5	15
Rampla Jnrs	8	4	2	2	18	10	14
Rocha	8	4	1	3	12	9	13
Wanderers	8	3	4	1	16	14	13
Liverpool	8	3	3	2	13	11	12
River Plate	8	3	3	2	9	8	12
Tacuarembo	8	2	4	2	5	7	10
Cerrito	8	2	3	3	7	9	9
Cerro	8	2	3	3	11	15	9
Danubio	8	2	1	5	7	9	7
Defensor	8	1	4	3	5	8	7
Plaza	8	1	4	3	8	15	7
M Misiones	8	1	3	4	8	9	6
Paysandu	8	1	1	6	6	17	4
Fenix	8	0	3	5	8	14	3

VENEZUELA

OPENING CHAMPIONSHIP

Sep 25: Aragua 0 ItalMaracaibo 1; Caracas 1 Carabobo 3; Monagas 2 Estudiantes 1; UA Maracaibo 3 Dep Tachira 2.
Sep 28: Monagas 0 Trujillanos 2.
Oct 1: Dep Tachira 2 Trujillanos 1.
Oct 2: UA Maracaibo 3 Aragua 0; Mineros Guayana 1 Monagas 0; Estudiantes 3 Caracas 2; Carabobo 0 ItalMaracaibo 1.
Oct 9: Trujillanos 0 Carabobo 1.
Oct 15: Trujillanos 1 UA Maracaibo 1.
Oct 16: Aragua 3 Carabobo 2; ItalMaracaibo 2 Estudiantes 0; Monagas 3 Dep Tachira 1.
Oct 19: Trujillanos 1 Mineros Guayana 0.

VENEZUELA – OPENING

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
UA Maracaibo	9	6	2	1	16	8	20
Dep Tachira	9	4	2	3	16	13	14
Carabobo	9	4	2	3	12	11	14
ItalMaracaibo	9	4	2	3	11	10	14
Aragua	9	4	2	3	8	11	14
Estudiantes	9	3	3	3	10	11	12
Trujillanos	9	2	4	3	6	6	10
Monagas	9	2	2	5	9	12	8
Mineros G'ana	8	2	2	4	7	10	8
Caracas	8	2	1	5	7	10	7

CENTRAL & NORTH AMERICA

MEXICO

OPENING CHAMPIONSHIP

Sep 24: Veracruz 2 Santos 2; Monterrey 2 Tigres 1; Cruz Azul 2 Dorados 2; Morelia 2 Pumas UNAM 2; Atlas 0 Jaguares 0.
Sep 25: San Luis 1 Guadalajara 2; Pachuca 3 Atlante 2; Tecos UAG 1 Toluca 2; America 4 Necaxa 1.
Sep 28: Toluca 0 America 1; Atlante 4 Morelia 3; Jaguares 3 Tecos UAG 3; Dorados 1 Monterrey 3; Necaxa 2 San Luis 1; Pumas UNAM 1 Atlas 0; Guadalajara 1 Veracruz 1; Tigres 2 Pachuca 2; Santos 3 Cruz Azul 2.
Oct 1: Toluca 0 Jaguares 1; Cruz Azul 0 Guadalajara 0; Monterrey 2 Santos 2; America 3 San Luis 1; Veracruz 2 Necaxa 3; Morelia 0 Tigres 2; Atlas 1 Atlante 0.
Oct 2: Tecos UAG 3 Pumas UNAM 1; Pachuca 2 Dorados 1.
Oct 15: Atlante 0 Tecos UAG 1; Jaguares 4 America 3; Guadalajara 2 Monterrey 3; Tigres 1 Atlas 2; Dorados 2 Morelia 1; Necaxa 3 Cruz Azul 1.
Oct 16: Pumas UNAM 0 Toluca 3; San Luis 1 Veracruz 0; Santos 0 Pachuca 0.

MEXICO – OPENING – GROUP 1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
America	12	9	2	1	25	12	29
Necaxa	12	7	3	2	23	18	24
Tecos UAG	12	4	2	6	18	22	14
San Luis	12	3	3	6	15	18	12
Morelia	12	3	2	7	18	21	11
Atlante	12	2	2	8	20	29	8

GROUP 2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Pachuca	12	6	4	2	22	15	22
Toluca	12	6	2	4	17	14	20
Santos	12	4	4	4	22	19	16
Pumas UNAM	12	3	4	5	10	21	13
Veracruz	12	2	5	5	19	26	11
Dorados	12	3	2	7	14	23	11

GROUP 3

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Monterrey	12	7	3	2	22	15	24
Cruz Azul	12	7	2	3	29	17	23
Tigres	12	5	2	5	24	17	17
Jaguares	12	3	6	3	17	21	15
Guadalajara	12	3	5	4	12	15	14
Atlas	12	4	1	7	11	15	13

LEADING GOALSCORERS
8 Sebastian Abreu (Dorados)
8 Nelson Cuevas (Pachuca)
8 Walter Gaitan (Tigres)

UNITED STATES

Sep 24: Real Salt Lake 1 Columbus Crew 2; Chivas USA 1 Colorado Rapids 3; New England Revolution 1 MetroStars 0; San Jose Earthquakes 1 FC Dallas 1.
Sep 25: Los Angeles Galaxy 2 Kansas City Wizards 1.
Oct 1: MetroStars 1 DC United 4; New England Revolution 0 San Jose Earthquakes 2; Columbus Crew 0 Chivas USA 1; Colorado Rapids 2 Real Salt Lake 1; Los Angeles Galaxy 2 FC Dallas 1; Kansas City Wizards 0 Chicago Fire 1.
Oct 5: Real Salt Lake 1 DC United 3; Chicago Fire 2 MetroStars 2; FC Dallas 2 Columbus Crew 1; Colorado Rapids 1 Chivas USA 1.
Oct 8: DC United 1 MetroStars 2; Chicago Fire 1 Columbus Crew 2; FC Dallas 0 Colorado Rapids 0; Kansas City Wizards 2 New England Revolution 2; San Jose Earthquakes 2 Real Salt Lake 2.
Oct 12: Real Salt Lake 0 Colorado Rapids 1.
Oct 15: New England Revolution 1 Chicago Fire 0; DC United 2 Columbus Crew 2; FC Dallas 2 Kansas City Wizards 2; Los Angeles Galaxy 1 San Jose Earthquakes 3.
Oct 16: Chivas USA 0 MetroStars 2.

USA – EASTERN CONFERENCE – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
New England	32	17	8	7	55	37	59
DC United	32	16	6	10	58	37	54
Chicago Fire	32	15	4	13	49	50	49
MetroStars	32	12	11	9	53	49	47
Kansas City	32	11	12	9	52	44	45
Columbus	32	11	5	16	34	45	38

WESTERN CONFERENCE – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
San Jose	32	18	10	4	53	31	64
FC Dallas	32	13	9	10	52	44	48
Colorado	32	13	6	13	40	37	45
LA Galaxy	32	13	6	13	44	45	45
Real Salt Lake	32	5	5	22	30	65	20
Chivas USA	32	4	6	22	31	67	18

Top four from each conference qualified for play-offs

TOP GOALSCORERS
17 Taylor Twellman (New England Revolution)
16 Jaime Moreno (DC United)

AFRICA

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Semi-finals, 1st legs

Sep 24: Raja Casablanca (Mor) 0 Etoile Sahel (Tun) 1.
Sep 25: Zamalek (Egy) 1 Al Ahly (Egy) 2.

Semi-finals, 2nd legs

Oct 15: Etoile Sahel 1 Raja Casablanca 0
Etoile Sahel 2-0 on agg.
Oct 16: Al Ahly 2 Zamalek 0 *Al Ahly 4-1 on agg.*

Final

1st leg - October 29; 2nd leg - November 12

AFRICAN CONFEDERATION CUP

Group A
Sep 24: FAR Rabat (Mor) 1 AS Marsa (Tun) 0.
Sep 25: King Faisal Babes (Gha) 2 Fello Star Labe (Gui) 0.
Oct 15: AS Marsa 1 King Faisal Babes 2; Fello Star Labe 0 FAR Rabat 1.

GROUP A – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
FAR Rabat	6	5	1	0	7	2	16
King Faisal B	6	4	0	2	9	5	12
AS Marsa	6	2	1	3	6	6	7
Fello Star Labe	6	0	0	6	2	11	0

Group B
Sep 24: Al Mokawloon (Egy) 0 Dolphin (Nig) 1.
Sep 25: Ismaili (Egy) 6 FC 105 Libreville (Gab) 0.
Oct 15: FC 105 Libreville 1 Al Mokawloon 0.
Oct 16: Dolphin 0 Ismaili 0.

GROUP B – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Dolphin	6	4	2	0	10	4	14
Ismaili	6	3	2	1	11	4	11
Al Mokawloon	6	2	0	4	6	8	6
FC 105	6	1	0	5	4	15	3

Group winners qualify for Final

Final

1st leg - November 5; 2nd leg - November 19

ASIA

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Semi-finals, 1st legs

Sep 28: Al Ain (UAE) 6 Shenzhen Jianlibao (Chn) 0; Busan I'Park (SKo) 0 Al Ittihad (Sau) 5.

Semi-finals, 2nd legs

Oct 12: Al Ittihad 2 Busan I'Park 0
Al Ittihad 7-0 on agg.
Shenzhen Jianlibao 0 Al Ain 0 *Al Ain 6-0 on agg.*

Final

1st leg - October 26; 2nd leg - October 31

AFC CUP

Semi-finals, 1st legs

Sep 28: Al Nijmeh (Leb) 3 Sun Hei (HK) 0; New Radiant (Mdv) 1 Al Faisaly (Jor) 1.

Semi-finals, 2nd legs

Oct 12: Al Faisaly 4 New Radiant 1
Al Faisaly 5-2 on agg.
Sun Hei 2 Al Nijmeh 3 *Al Nijmeh 6-2 on agg.*

Final, 1st leg

Oct 19 - Amman
Al Faisaly 1 (Saed 36)
Al Nijmeh 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 10,000

2nd leg - October 26

JAPAN

Sep 24: Urawa Reds 0 Yokohama F Marinos 0; JEF United 2 Shimizu S-Pulse 1; Kawasaki Frontale 2 Omiya Ardija 1; Jubilo Iwata 1 Kashiwa Reysol 0; Nagoya Grampus Eight 1 Cerezo Osaka 3; Gamba Osaka 3 Kashima Antlers 3; Vissel Kobe 1 Tokyo Verdy 1969 1.
Sep 25: FC Tokyo 0 Oita Trinita 0; Albirex Niigata 0 Sanfrecce Hiroshima 1.
Oct 1: Kashima Antlers 2 JEF United 2; Omiya Ardija 0 FC Tokyo 1; Kashiwa Reysol 1 Vissel Kobe 0; Tokyo Verdy 1969 4 Jubilo Iwata 4; Kawasaki Frontale 3 Albirex Niigata 0; Yokohama F Marinos 0 Oita Trinita 3; Sanfrecce Hiroshima 1 Nagoya Grampus Eight 2.
Oct 2: Shimizu S-Pulse 1 Gamba Osaka 4; Cerezo Osaka 3 Urawa Reds 1.
Oct 15: Urawa Reds 7 Kashiwa Reysol 0; FC Tokyo 2 Sanfrecce Hiroshima 2; Albirex Niigata 1 Tokyo Verdy 1969 1; Nagoya Grampus Eight 1 Kawasaki Frontale 4; Cerezo Osaka 1 Omiya Ardija 0; Vissel Kobe 1 Gamba Osaka 4; Oita Trinita 5 Shimizu S-Pulse 0.
Oct 16: JEF United 2 Yokohama F Marinos 2; Jubilo Iwata 1 Kashima Antlers 1.

JAPAN

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Gamba Osaka	27	16	6	5	72	46	54
Kashima Antlers	27	14	7	6	52	33	49
Cerezo Osaka	27	13	7	7	39	35	46
Urawa Reds	27	12	8	7	49	30	44
Jubilo Iwata	27	12	7	8	42	31	43
K'saki Frontale	27	13	4	10	43	33	43
JEF United	27	11	10	6	43	36	43
Sanfrecce H	27	10	10	7	39	29	40
Grampus Eight	27	9	8	10	37	39	35
Yokohama FM	27	8	10	9	32	36	34
FC Tokyo	27	7	11	9	32	33	32
Oita Trinita	27	9	5	13	32	34	32
Albirex Niigata	27	8	7	12	39	52	31
Kashiwa Reysol	27	7	9	11	29	40	30
Shimizu S-Pulse	27	6	10	11	31	40	28
Omiya Ardija	27	8	4	15	29	41	28
Tokyo Verdy	27	5	11	11	33	58	26
Vissel Kobe	27	4	8	15	26	53	20

SOUTH KOREA

SECOND STAGE

Sep 24: Ulsan 1 Suwon 1; Pohang 1 Daegu 2.
Sep 25: Gwangju 1 Busan 1; Songnam 2 Bucheon 1; Chonbuk 2 Seoul 1; Chunnam 1 Daejeon 0.
Oct 2: Daejeon 0 Gwangju 1; Seoul 2 Incheon 2; Bucheon 3 Chonbuk 1; Daegu 1 Songnam 0; Suwon 2 Pohang 0; Busan 2 Ulsan 3.
Oct 5: Chunnam 2 Gwangju 0; Ulsan 1 Daejeon 0; Songnam 1 Suwon 0; Chonbuk 0 Daegu 2; Pohang 1 Busan 0; Incheon 1 Bucheon 0.
Oct 16: Daejeon 0 Pohang 0; Bucheon 1 Seoul 0; Daegu 1 Incheon 1; Suwon 2 Chonbuk 2; Busan 1 Songnam 2; Chunnam 1 Ulsan 2.
Oct 19: Ulsan 1 Gwangju 0; Songnam 2 Daejeon 0; Chonbuk 1 Busan 1; Pohang 1 Chunnam 1; Incheon 1 Suwon 1; Seoul 1 Daegu 2.

SOUTH KOREA – SECOND STAGE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Songnam	8	6	1	1	16	6	19
Daegu	9	6	1	2	12	7	19
Ulsan	9	5	2	2	11	7	17
Bucheon	8	5	1	2	10	5	16
Incheon	8	4	3	1	11	8	15
Suwon	9	3	4	2	10	8	13
Pohang	9	3	3	3	7	8	12
Chunnam	8	3	1	4	7	9	10
Daejeon	8	2	2	4	4	7	8
Gwangju	8	2	1	5	4	9	7
Seoul	8	1	3	4	8	10	6
Chonbuk	8	1	2	5	7	17	5
Busan	8	0	2	6	7	13	2

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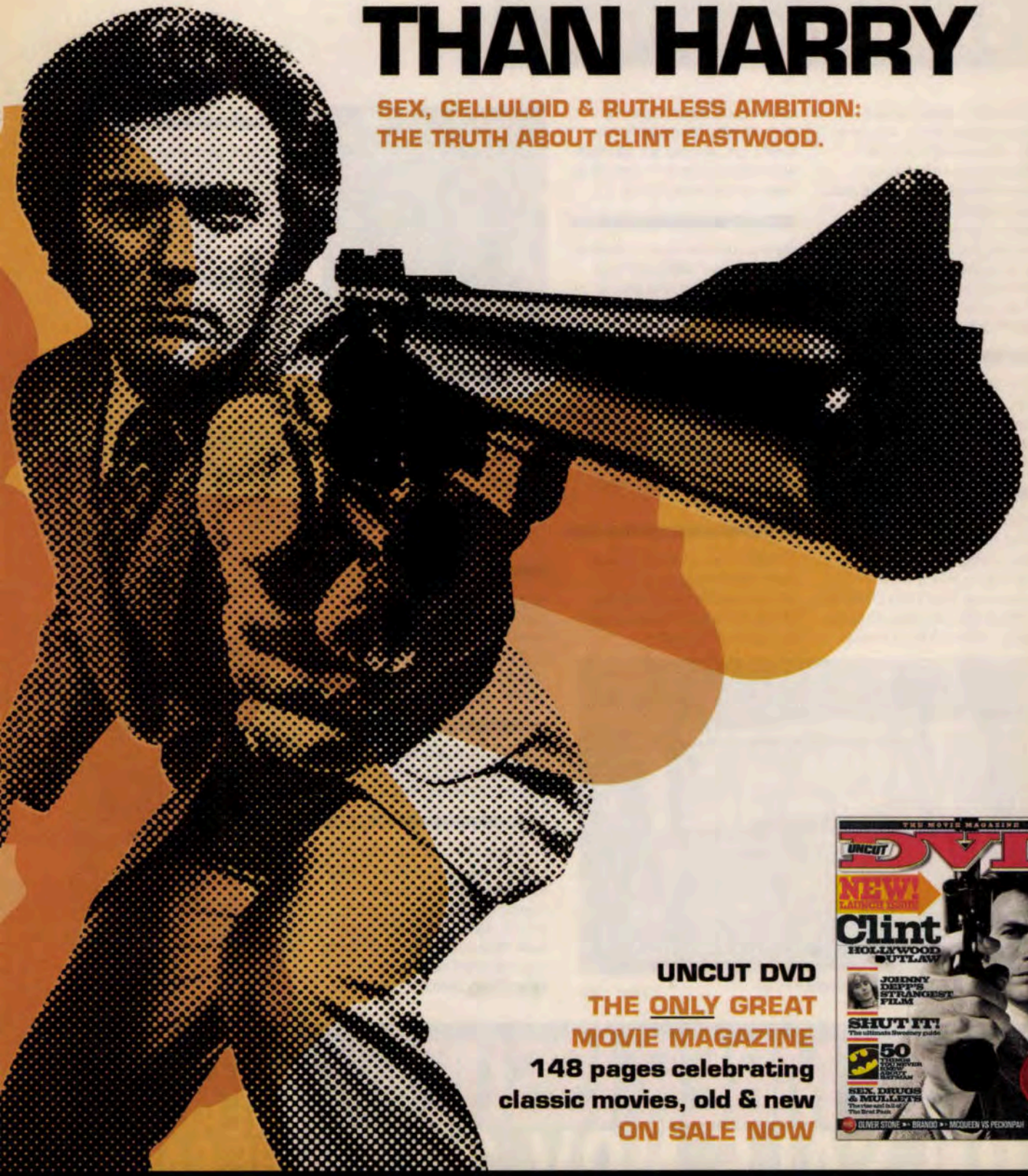

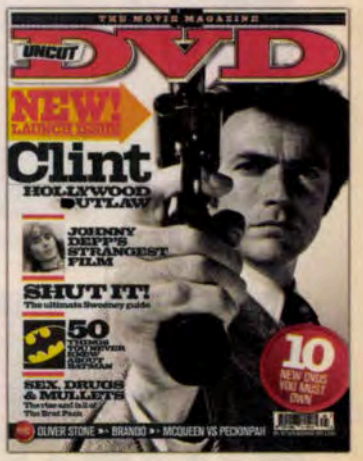

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the Knowledge

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Stadium disasters

THE WORLD'S WORST football stadium disaster was in Moscow in 1982 as fans were leaving the National stadium down an icy staircase following a UEFA Cup match between Spartak Moscow and Haarlem. On hearing a last-minute goal, they tried to re-enter the stands, crushing people caught in the middle. Although the official death toll was put at 66, it was widely reported to be 340.

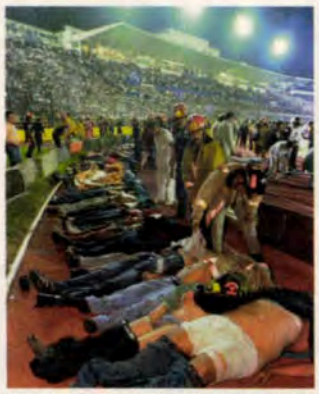
The first major disaster was in 1902 at Ibrox Park in Glasgow. Twenty-five people were killed and 517 injured when the West Stand collapsed during an England-Scotland game.

Two disasters took place within weeks of each other in Africa in 2001. In April, a stampede at Ellis Park, Johannesburg, during a match between local rivals Kaizer Chiefs and Orlando Pirates resulted in 43 deaths. In May, 130 died in Accra, Ghana, following a stampede caused by police spraying teargas at Asante Kotoko fans, who had reacted angrily when their side lost 2-1 to arch-rivals Hearts of Oak having led 1-0.

The most common cause of disasters has been crowd congestion. Ibrox was the scene of another disaster in 1971 when 65 were killed as fans tried to re-enter the stadium following a late equaliser by Rangers in a match against Celtic. Three years earlier, in Buenos Aires, 74 died as they tried to leave a River Plate-Boca Juniors match, only to find the exits blocked. In 1974, 49 died in Cairo as crowds trying to enter the Zamalek stadium caused a wall to collapse.

In 1989, 96 were killed in Britain's worst sporting disaster, at Hillsborough, Sheffield, before the FA Cup semi-final between Liverpool and Nottingham Forest.

Charred remains...the scene after the Bradford fire of 1985



Crushed...the dead are laid out in Guatemala City

The Bradford disaster in May 1985, in which 56 people died, is the only major football tragedy to have been caused by a fire.

Forged tickets were deemed the main cause of the 1996 tragedy in Guatemala City, when 81 were killed as 60,000 squeezed into a 45,000-capacity stadium for a World Cup qualifier against Costa Rica.

A sudden storm provoked a stampede by fans running for cover at Nepal's National stadium in 1988, killing 70.

In 1964 in Lima, 318 died when fans rioted in anger at the referee's decision to disallow a late goal by Peru in an Olympic qualifier against Argentina. In 1991, 40 were killed in Transvaal, South Africa, when a refereeing decision triggered crowd violence during a Kaizer Chiefs-Orlando Pirates game.

In 1985, 39 people died at the Heysel stadium in Brussels after a wall collapsed when fans were trying to flee rioting English supporters before the Liverpool-Juventus European Cup Final.

In 1988, 30 died in Tripoli when a stand collapsed during a friendly between Libya and Malta. Fans panicked after a man brandishing a knife or gun went berserk.

Trouble before tragedy...the riot at Heysel

HIGHEST DEATH TOLLS

340	Moscow, 1982
318	Lima, 1964
130	Accra, 2001
96	Hillsborough, 1989
81	Guatemala City, 1996
74	Buenos Aires, 1968
70	Kathmandu, 1988
65	Glasgow, 1971
56	Bradford, 1985
49	Cairo, 1974
43	Ellis Park, 2001
40	Transvaal, 1991
39	Heysel, 1985

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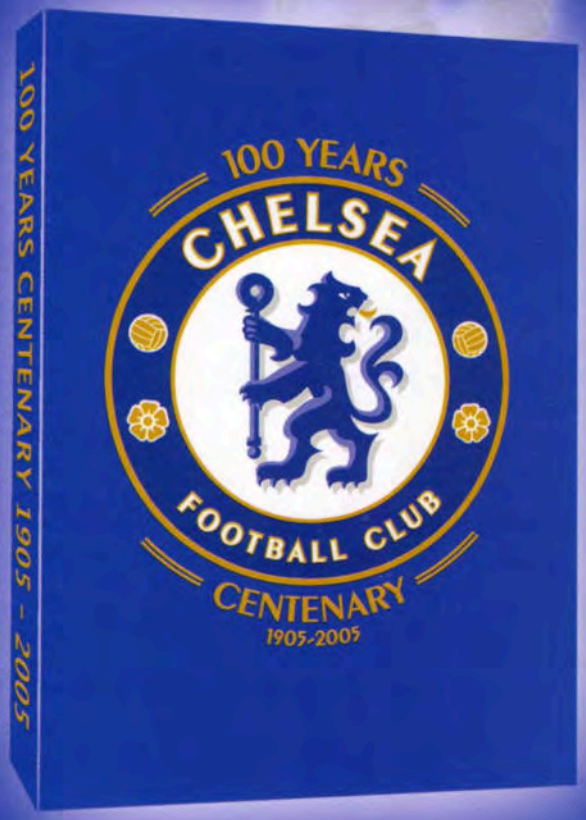

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TOTAL FOOTBALL	EASTCOTE	0044 22084291
UNITED SPORTS	ILFORD	0044 20855043
WARWICK SPORTS	WARWICK	0044 19264976
WESTON SUPER SPORTS	WESTON SUPER MARE	0044 19346325
WISDOM SPORTS LTD	HAYWARDS HEATH	0044 14444513
WOODLEY SPORTS	READING	0044 11896979